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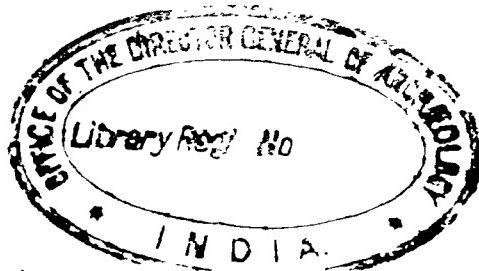
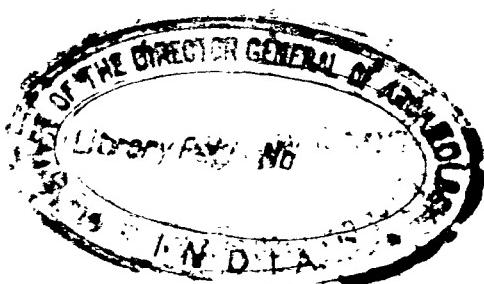
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THE EVOLUTION OF  
ITALIAN SCULPTURE

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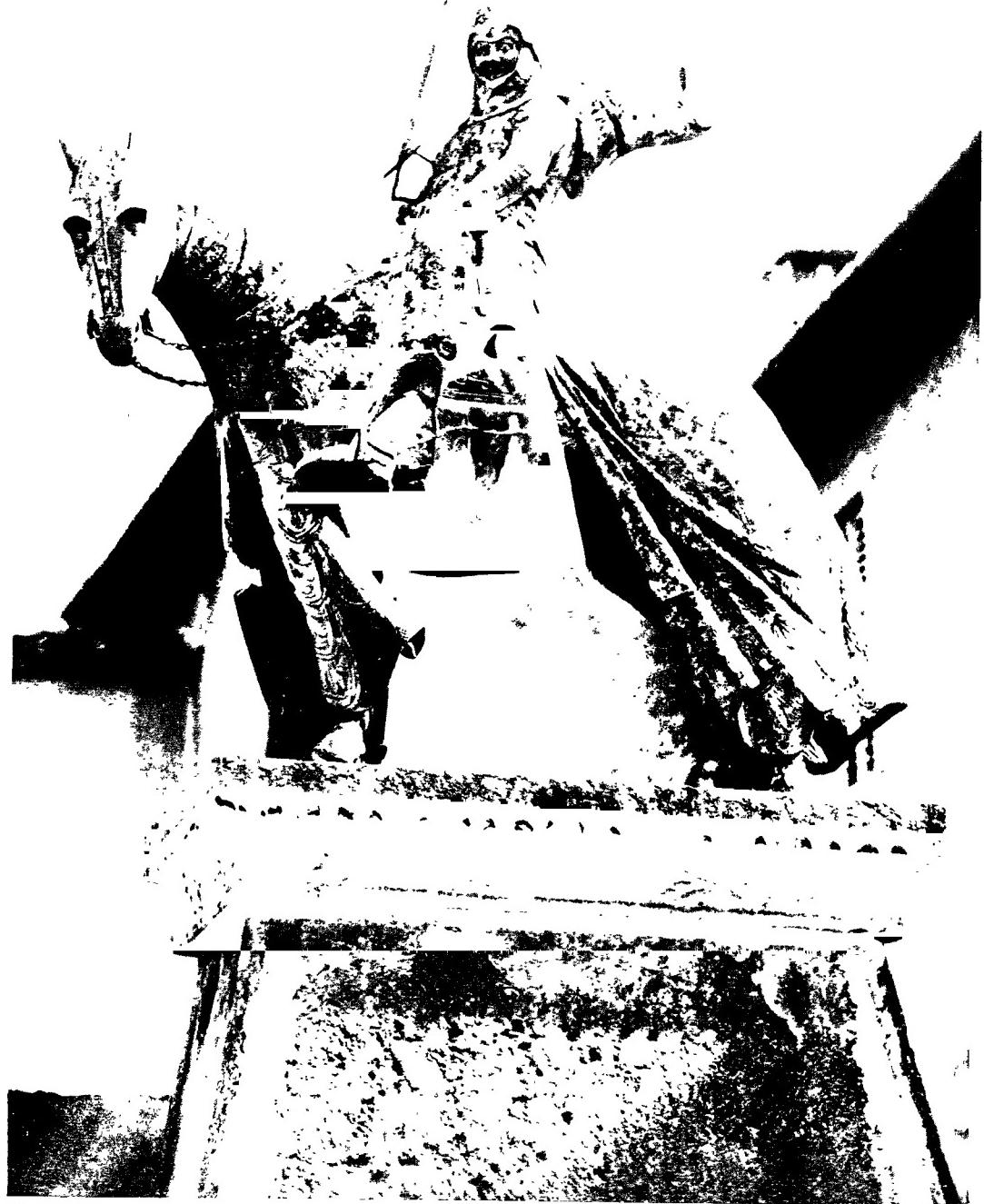


FIG. I.

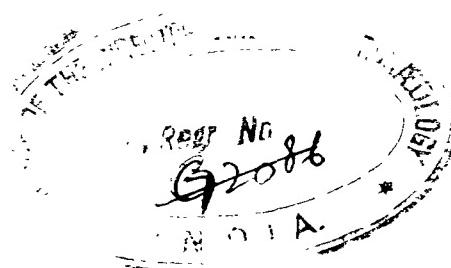
CAN GRANDE VERONA.

[Frontispiece.]

# THE EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

BY LORD BALCARRES

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



LONDON  
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## PREFACE

THE following pages attempt to deal with the whole basis of plastic art in Italy, recording the fundamental stages of progress, and analysing the methods, theories, and ideals of the various schools of sculpture.

Particular stress is therefore laid upon the actual sculpture and its ethical development, without entering upon biographical details or problems of authenticity, which have undergone such careful scrutiny during the last twenty years.

For the purposes of the present volume I select Benedetto Antelami as the earliest sculptor whose outlook was essentially Italian. His predecessors produced work of singular interest, valuable in itself and important in its influence upon later sculpture; but I have purposely excluded this earlier period, as not strictly falling within the category of Italian sculpture. I hope that in a subsequent volume a different system of analysis and illustration can be more

suitably adapted to examining the primitive phase.

As regards the illustrations in this book, I need only say that they have been chosen as typical examples of style and treatment. So far as possible I have arranged them in a series of groups, giving at a glance the survey of some particular subject-matter or craftsmanship. A synthetic disposition may afford useful opportunities of comparing varied aspects of a great problem.

7, AUDLEY SQUARE,

*June 1909.*

## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION, page 1. Tradition of Imperial Art, 2.—Decadence of Western Art, 3.—Oriental influences, 4.—The Eastern Empire, 6.—Byzantium, 7.—Iconoclasm, 8.—Ravenna, 10.—New sources of inspiration, 11.—Animal life in early plastic art, 13.—Decoration, 15.—Transmission of new artistic influences, 17.—Characteristics of the Barbarian invaders, 18.

CHAPTER I. INDIGENOUS RUDIMENTS OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE, page 21. Benedetto Antelami, 25.—Borgo San Donnino, 28.—Thirteenth-century façades (note), 28.—The bronze door, 29.—Growing demand for sculpture, 33.

CHAPTER II. PROGRESS OF FORM, page 36. Niccolo Pisano, 36.—Niccolo Pisano and Gothic influences, 39.—Hostility towards Gothic art (note), 42.—Fixation of type (note), 43.—Status of the sculptor (note), 45.—Bas-relief, 47.—Milanese reliefs, 52.—The Lunette, 54.—The Niche, 56.—Free-standing and the Group, 57.—Guido Mazzoni's groups, 60.—High Renaissance groups, 63.—Michael Angelo and the group, 64.—The Equestrian statue, 67.—Michael Angelo as master of form, 72.—Finish and emplacement, 74.—Relation to architecture, 76.—Caryatides (note), 78.—Certosa di Pavia, 79.—The Tondo (note), 80.—Decorated surfaces, 82.—The background, 85.—Influence of the Goldsmiths (note), 86.

CHAPTER III. PORTRAITURE, page 89. Traditions of Portraiture, 89.—The essentials of Portraiture, 91.—The Portrait Bust, 92.—The Thirteenth Century, 94.—The Fourteenth Century, 97.—Portraits of the Popes (note), 99.—Fifteenth-century Portraiture, 100.—Childhood in plastic art (note), 103.—Sixteenth-century Portraiture, 107.—Coiffure (note), 109.—Honourific Portraiture, 110.—The kneeling figure (note), 112.—Conventionalised portraits, 113.—Michael Angelo as portraitist, 115.—Seventeenth century reaction.—Roman Busts (note), 119.—Bernini as portraitist, 121.

## CONTENTS

CHAPTER IV. ANATOMY AND THE NUDE, page 126. The Traditions of "Beauty," 126.—The canon of measurement, 128.—Influence of Biblical Iconography, 132.—The study of Anatomy, 134.—Movement and animation, 137.—Influence of material (note), 139.—Exaggeration and reaction, 141.—Michael Angelo as master of anatomy, 144.—Drapery (note), 146.

CHAPTER V. RELIGIOUS THOUGHT ALL-PERVADING, page 149. Progress of Iconography, 151.—The Madonna, 154.—Tendencies towards complexity, 158.—Christ as child, 160.—Christ as man, 161.—The Crucifixion, 163.—Prophet, martyr, and apostle, 165.—Allegory and paraphrase, 169.—Mysticism, 171.—Symbolisms (note), 172.—Michael Angelo as mystic, 175.

CHAPTER VI. PLASTIC EMBODIMENTS OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT, page 177. The Altar, 177.—The Shrine, 178.—The Door, 180.—The Pulpit and Cantoria, 182.—Influence of the Façade (note), 184.—The Tomb, 185.—Classical traditions of sepulture, 186.—The Cosmati, 188.—Arnolfo di Cambio, 190.—Giovanni Pisano, 191.—Tombs of the Pedagogues (note), 193.—Gothic Tombs of Naples, 195.—The Scaliger Monuments, 198.—Florentine Tombs of the Quattrocento, 200.—Bernardo Rossellino, 204.—The Slab Tomb, 208.—The Free-standing Tomb, 210.—Tombs of the Doges, 211.—Bambaja and Milanese Monuments, 214.—Duplication of motive, 217.—Tombs of the Popes, 219.—Beautification and restoration of Monuments (note), 221.—The Epitaph, 222.—Emblems of mortality, 223.—The Charnel-house, 225.—Terribilità, 227.—The sense of Drama, 228.—Giacomo della Quercia, 231.—Michael Angelo as dramatist, 233.—Decline of religious thought, 236.—Humanism and classical paraphrase, 239.

CHAPTER VII. SECULAR THOUGHT AND SECULAR FORM, page 242. Absence of Northern analogies, 242.—Ephemeridæ, 245.—Stucco (note), 246.—The Fountain, 247.—The Grotesque, 250.—The Historical Episode, 252.—The Crowd, 253—Genre, 254.—Art of the Medallist, 256.—The small bronze, 258.—Plastic art as basis of decoration, 259.—Michael Angelo's scheme of decoration, 262.—Ghiberti, 264.—Flora and fauna, 266.—Heraldry, 268.—Polychromacy, 269.

## CONTENTS

ix

- CHAPTER VIII. CLASSICAL THOUGHT, page 273. Relative scarcity of Classical Statuary, 273.—Literary and sentimental influences, 276.—Continuity of Classical tradition, 277.—Classical Mythology, 279.—Classical Reminiscences, 283.—Classicism, 285.—Opulence, 286.—Vandalism, 288.—Attitude of the Popes, 290.—Appreciation of Sculpture, 293.—Influence of Criticism, 294.—The Classical subject-matter, 298.—The Triumphal Arch, 301.—The Slave and Captive, 303.—The Colossus, 304.—Cult of physical strength and perfection, 308.
- CHAPTER IX. BAROQUE, page 311.—Tendency to exaggeration, 311.—Unification of Italian sculpture, 313.—New influences, 314.—Eclecticism, 315.—Uniformity of treatment, 317.—Conventionalism, 319.—Mannerism and affectation, 321.—The artist's model, 322.—Bernini, 324.—Absence of repose, 327.—Drapery, 328.—Incongruity and eccentricity, 329.—Romanticism, 332.—Baroque ideals, 335.—Distinction of eighteenth-century artists, 336.—Degeneration, 338.—Canova, 339.



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIG.

1. CAN GRANDE, VERONA . . . . . *Frontispiece*

### RELIEFS

	FACING PAGE
2. Scenes from Genesis, Modena Façade . . . . .	22
3. Cenacolo, Modena . . . . .	22
4. Deposition, B Antelami, Parma . . . . .	22
5. Annunciation, Barga . . . . .	25
6. Annunciation, Pistoja . . . . .	25
7. Bronze Door, Bonanno, Pisa . . . . .	25

### FAÇADES

8. Cathedral, Siena . . . . .	28
9. San Michele, Pavia . . . . .	28
10. Cathedral, Borgo San Donnino . . . . .	28
11. Santa Maria, Arezzo . . . . .	28
12. San Michele, Lucca . . . . .	28
13. Cathedral, Pisa . . . . .	28

### APPLIED RELIEFS

14. Shrine of St. Peter Martyr, Balduccio, Milan . . . . .	44
15. Christ among the Apostles, San Marco, Venice . . . . .	50
16. Door of Santa Sabina, Rome . . . . .	50

### LUNETTES

17. Deposition, Niccolo Pisano, Lucca . . . . .	54
18. St. Dominic and St. Francis, Florence . . . . .	54
19. Thomas of Ravenna, Venice . . . . .	54
20. Admiral Capello, Venice . . . . .	54

### GROUPS, EARLY RENAISSANCE

21. Bronze Fountain Head, Rosso, Perugia . . . . .	59
22. Pulpit, Giovanni Pisano, Pisa . . . . .	59
23. Judgment of Solomon, Doge's Palace, Venice . . . . .	59

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## GROUPS, HIGH RENAISSANCE

FIG.		FACING PAGE
24.		
25.	Rape of the Sabines, Gian Bologna, Loggia de' Lanzi, Florence	63
26.		
27.	Perseus, B. Cellini, Florence	64
28.	Apollo and Daphne, Bernini, Rome	64
29.	Judith, Donatello, Florence	66

## EQUESTRIAN MONUMENTS

30.	Barnabo Visconti, Milan	68
31.	Gattamelata, Donatello, Padua	70
32.	Colleone, Verrochio, Venice	70
33.	Philip IV., Tacca, Madrid	70
34.	Ranuccio Farnese, Mocchi, Piacenza	70

## PORTRAITURE, MEN

35.	Pietro della Vigna, Capua	94
36.	Boniface VIII., Manno, Bologna	94
37.	Ferdinand of Aragon, Naples	94
38.	St. Joseph, Mazzoni, Modena	99
39.	Dante, Naples	99
40.	Brutus, Michael Angelo, Florence	100
41.	Bronze Boy, Venice	100
42.	St. John, Faenza	100
43.	Young Gattamelata, Florence	100
44.	Piero de' Medici, Florence	100
45.	Salutati, Mino da Fiesole, Fiesole	100

## PORTRAITURE, WOMEN

46.	Bust of Woman, Laurana, Berlin	102
47.	Bust of Woman, Laurana, Louvre	102
48.	Costanza Buonarelli, Bernini, Florence	103
49.	Girl with Flowers, Verrochio, Florence	103
50.	Beatrice d'Este, G. C. Romano, Louvre	102

## CHILDREN

51.	Foundling, Andrea della Robbia, Florence	104
52.	Cantoria, Donatello, Florence (fragment)	104
53.	Cantoria, Luca della Robbia, Florence (fragment)	104

## PORTRAITURE, MEN

55.	Charles V., L. Leoni, Madrid	111
56.	Cosimo I., B. Cellini, Florence	111
57.	Paul III., Naples	111
58.	Francesco d'Este, Bernini, Modena	122
59.	Lami, Spinazzi, Florence	122

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

xiii

### ANATOMY AND THE NUDE

FIG.

	FACING PAGE
60. David, Donatello, Florence . . . . .	134
61. David, Verrochio, Florence . . . . .	134
62. David, Michael Angelo, Florence . . . . .	134
63. David, Bernini, Rome . . . . .	134
64. St. Sebastian, M. Civitale, Lucca . . . . .	136
65. St. Sebastian, Maini, Rome . . . . .	136
66. St. Sebastian, A. Rossellino, Empoli . . . . .	136
67. St. Sebastian, B. da Majano, Florence . . . . .	136
68. Eve, A. Rizzo, Venice . . . . .	138
69. Andromeda, Orvieto (Raffael) . . . . .	138
70. Venus, Franciabigio, Rome . . . . .	138
71. Andromeda, B. Cellini, Florence . . . . .	138
72. Mercury, Gian Bologna, Florence . . . . .	141
73. St. Bartholomew, Marco d'Agiate, Milan . . . . .	141
74. Slave, Michael Angelo, Louvre . . . . .	141

### RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

75. Annunciation, Mocchi, Orvieto (Raffael) . . . . .	158
76. Annunciation, Donatello, Florence . . . . .	158
77. Visitation, Luca della Robbia, Pistoja . . . . .	158
78. Madonna, Michael Angelo, Bruges . . . . .	160
79. Madonna, Puget, Genoa . . . . .	160
80. Madonna della Chiesetta, Sansovino, Venice . . . . .	160
81. Madonna, M. Civitale, Lucca . . . . .	160
82. Madonna, Donatello, Siena Cathedral . . . . .	160
83. Christ on the Cross, Donatello, Padua . . . . .	165

### THE VIRTUE

84. Pudicizia, Corradini, Naples . . . . .	169
85. Purity, Agostino di Duccio, Perugia . . . . .	169
86. Peace, Sansovino, Venice . . . . .	169
87. Furia addormentata, Rome . . . . .	171

### THE HERO

88. St. Michael, Groppoli . . . . .	176
89. St. George, Donatello, Florence . . . . .	176
90. St. Isidore, Venice . . . . .	176

### TOMBS

91. Cardinal de Braye, Arnolfo di Cambio, Orvieto . . . . .	190
92. Passaggeri, Bologna . . . . .	192
93. Tarlati, Arezzo . . . . .	192
94. Sinibaldi, Cellino di Nese, Pistoja . . . . .	194

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIG.		FACING PAGE
95.	Stefaneschi, Rome . . . . .	194
96.	Mary of Anjou, Naples . . . . .	197
97.	Federighi, Luca della Robbia, Florence . . . . .	197
98.	Bruni, Rossellino, Florence . . . . .	205
99.	Cardinal of Portugal, A. Rossellino, Florence . . . . .	205
100.	Ilaria del Carretto, Giacomo della Quercia, Lucca . . . . .	210
101.	Gattamelata, Padua . . . . .	210
102.	Sarcophagus, South Kensington Museum, London . . . . .	210
103.	Henry VII., Tino da Camaino, Pisa . . . . .	210
104.	Albertoni, Rome . . . . .	210
105.	San Romano, M. Civitale, Lucca . . . . .	210
106.	Mary of Aragon, A. Rossellino, Naples . . . . .	215
107.	Guidarelli, Ravenna . . . . .	215
 TOMBS, DETAIL OF HEADS 		
108.	Ilaria del Carretto, Giacomo della Quercia, Lucca . . . . .	216
109.	Barbara Manfredi, Fosli . . . . .	218
110.	St. Christina, Bolsena . . . . .	218
111.	Medea Colleone, Amadeo, Bergamo . . . . .	218
112.	Sixtus IV., Pollauolo, Rome . . . . .	218
113.	Guidarello Guidarelli, Ravenna . . . . .	218
114.	Gaston de Foix, Bambaja, Milan . . . . .	218
 BAROQUE 		
115.	Monument of Princess Odescalchi-Chigi, Rome . . . . .	331
116.	Ecstasy of St. Theresa, Bernini, Rome . . . . .	334
 CLASSICAL REACTION 		
117.	Perseus, Canova, Rome . . . . .	341
118.	Boxer, Canova, Rome . . . . .	341
119.	Apollo Belvedere, Rome . . . . .	341
120.	St. Bruno, Houdon, Rome . . . . .	341

# THE EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

## INTRODUCTION

THE sculpture which emerges during the twelfth century as an organised and national entity, with Benedetto Antelami as its first Italian exponent, has its sources in a thousand years of embarrassment and doubt; the period intervening between the death of Constantine and this long-delayed revival is remote and obscure. The actual monument is scarce, age and parentage are matters of speculation, and formative influences give rise to acute controversy; but with the progress of science and improved methods of comparative induction, it is becoming more and more clear that it will soon be possible to reconstruct a logical and consistent history of Plastic Art during these pre-Italian centuries. Evolution as such can disregard the merits or demerits of Origins, Renaissance, or Decadence, for all moves—imperceptibly at one time, or at another with alarming speed; but each school or century, indeed almost

## 2 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

every thoughtful and mature work of art, is inter-related, and represents a definite stage in relation to something which follows or goes before. No manifestation can be ignored, for no single school or statue is fortuitous. There is constant change in outward form, but it can be shown that men who were poles asunder, Gruamons for instance taken in conjunction with such a person as Corradini, were actuated by the same fundamental motives and were striving after analogous results. Good will be found everywhere, and praise of one generation need never be awarded at the expense of its successor.

TRADITION OF IMPERIAL ART.—The old theory that the art of Imperial Rome was a pallid reflection of Hellenic genius is no longer seriously maintained, for the definite scope and character of this period are now fully established. It is true that Rome was cosmopolitan in a peculiar degree. Her gigantic inheritance of West and East alike, her tendency to centralisation, and at the later stages of her history the lassitude which preceded enervation and gave openings to the invasion of foreign craftsmen, all contributed to the complexity of form and ideal which at first sight may well be deceptive. Moreover Imperial Rome was political in her tastes rather than æsthetic, the epoch-making monuments being archways, circuses, and public baths—structures based on personal and social rather than upon religious or artistic requirements. Nevertheless the scale of

wealth was so high that a standard of comfort which demanded extensive decoration, actually caused more employment to be given than was the case in later centuries during periods of real artistic enthusiasm.

DECADENCE OF WESTERN ART.—It may be assumed that by the end of the third century, when the extension of Christian propaganda was so rapid as to require a persecution of Diocletian vigour, and when the vague nations beyond the Alps were beginning to cause real anxiety—it may be assumed that the buildings of Imperial Rome, reproduced in every provincial capital, were remarkable for their architectural magnificence, and equally for their wealth of plastic adornment. From the moment of the final division of the Empire into the Eastern and Western halves, there ensued a long series of blood-curdling tragedies springing from dynastic rivalries, which, without necessarily paralysing artistic patronage, so far weakened the reigning houses as to preclude stability of government or prolonged resistance to the encroachment of barbarian migrations. Italy was less frequently the scene of internal strife and disorder, but being more exposed to invasion than Constantinople, she had to undergo a series of disasters during the fifth and sixth centuries which might well have killed every vestige of literary and æsthetic aspiration. Rome herself was sacked by Alaric, Genseric, and Totila; she was in turn re-

#### 4 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

covered for the Empire by Belisarius and Narses, whose violence outvied that of the Northern tribesmen. Shortly after the last of these great sieges, the latter half of the sixth century was visited by a terrific plague, then by famine and a crushing outbreak of anthrax, and finally by floods which must have made permanent lakes of whole provinces in the North. How Italy survived it is difficult to conceive. The whole nation must have been broken in health and morale, lacking the ordinary resources of livelihood, and devoting all its remaining energies to the urgent demands of providing itself with food and shelter. Few monuments can have been made throughout this period of catastrophe and chaos; certainly those which have come down to us signalise the only moment in the art history of the Peninsula, when invention and imagination alike seemed to be stricken by intellectual as well as by manual atrophy. The close of the seventh century marks the final decadence of the Western Empire so far as art was concerned; but it must be remembered that some of the external agencies which during the following three hundred years gradually coalesced and formed the entity of Italian art, were already permeating the whole Peninsula.

ORIENTAL INFLUENCES.—It is to the new capital of the Eastern Empire, to Byzantium, that tradition has ascribed the earliest Renaissance; the problem, however, is not readily solved. The origin of Italian sculpture has been successively

sought in Greece, Egypt, and Constantinople ; later on an embryo is detected in Asia Minor or Chaldea, and considered argument has been advanced to trace the origins to the Central Steppes of Asia. Arab and Persian influences can be demonstrated, while Egypt and the Northern littoral of Africa maintained a close touch with Italy. It is probable that as time goes on this process of dethronement will be modified, and that closer investigation will redirect one's search for the primitive essentials of Italian art, to Rome itself and to Ravenna.

The great Empire which so readily fell a prey to invaders, owing to her defenceless condition and to laxity of public life, must have been a marvel of accumulated wealth. The transference of the seat of Empire to Constantinople (involving the removal of patronage and craftsmen) was the first blow to the artistic supremacy of Rome, and subsequent disasters, which sapped vitality and mortified invention, made Italy all the more susceptible to external forces when at length the moment of repose arrived. It is advisable to summarise these varied agencies, and to show the complexity of motives, creeds, and characteristics, which must be assessed in analysing the formative influences at work. It is no longer tenable to assume that at any given date the arts of Christendom possessed an identical physiognomy, nor can any single formula explain any single phenomenon. Not one but many a formula is involved, and no

## 6 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

school of art is suspended in isolation. Just as Gothic art began before its time and long outlived it, so in earlier centuries we shall find action, inter-action, and re-action inextricably combined—confused as they may appear in many particulars,—but all awaiting a lucid and precise explanation, which, notwithstanding the absence of text and the paucity of monuments, may confidently be anticipated.

THE EASTERN EMPIRE.—It is necessary in the first place to realise how widespread were Eastern influences, and how small a geographical space was occupied by Rome itself. Southern Italy and Sicily were to all intents and purposes Greek settlements, and there was a consistent migration from the Delta of the Nile as far westwards as Algiers, while the Eastern shores of the Adriatic provided homes for flourishing Greek colonies, and Greece herself lay opposite the Italian coast. The Western Empire must have regarded the Near East as an integral factor in all the essentials of government, commerce, and religion. It was to the East that Constantine went, towards the home of Christianity, to countries using the religious symbols adopted by himself, and speaking the very language from which the Bible had been translated—indeed Constantine may have been unconscious of the dissolution which his action was fated to involve. Within a generation the divorce between East and West was finally completed. The Eastern Empire became the home

of heresies, the seat of Councils, the birthplace of successive Popes who took up their residence in Italy—always retaining an irresistible attraction to pilgrims from the West, while exercising a constant and at times a dominant pressure on Occidental thought.

BYZANTIUM.—It was inevitable that Constantinople, which commanded the more civilised portions of Asia and Africa, which almost lived in view of the still intact Parthenon, should have created new vogues and fresh ideals. Four centuries of Mohammedan rule have obliterated so much that it is impossible to reconstruct a just picture of the *bella epoca* of Byzantine art, except in regard to the inalterable features of her chief architectural monuments ; Santa Sofia is alone sufficient to prove that Constantine and Justinian never lost faith in grandeur and magnificence, though it would appear that plastic art was unduly restricted in scale. The inventories drawn up by Anastasius the Librarian show that Constantine possessed a certain number of life-sized statues, but they were quite exceptional, and the innumerable gifts he made to churches were almost exclusively silver and gold. Byzantine sculpture was small in compass, enriched with precious stones, and partaking of jewellery ; as a rule it was a non-monumental art in which the material seems to have been nearly as important as the form. Of secular art practically nothing survives. At the same time there is excellent authority for

## 8 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

the obvious supposition that during the times of splendour, under Justinian for instance, or later on throughout the Macedonian dynasty, sculpture must have flourished in harmony with the other arts. The marvellous series of bronze doors scattered over Southern Italy, the record of commissions placed at Constantinople (such as the sarcophagi ordered by the Patriarch of Grado in 826), and indeed a number of surviving monuments in marble, sufficiently prove that a school of sculpture springing from Eastern mind and craftsmanship did actually exist, though frequently alienated from its indigenous soil.

ICONOCLASM.—It may be assumed that the Iconoclastic persecution not only destroyed the bulk of existing statuary, but dispersed the sculptors, as well as shattering their time-honoured traditions. This singular movement, which lasted no less than a century and a half, betrays the nervousness felt by the Church against the growth of polytheism and the revival of pagan ceremony. At first it seems to have been a purely religious protest, not actuated by hostility to art as such, though carried to the extreme length of removing the head of Christ from the coinage. The savagery with which the campaign was conducted involved massacre, revolution, and excommunications, and was so protracted, and pursued with such intensity of hatred, as to end in effective schism between Western and Eastern Christianity. Iconoclasm seems to have been especially directed

against portable statuary, that usually carried in procession and associated with relic worship ; decoration proper remained unaffected, and painting only suffered in a minor degree. A later phase of the movement assumed a quasi-political aspect, resolving itself into a struggle between Church and State—Emperor versus the Monasticism which was held responsible for toleration of images. The extent and popularity of sculpture, the importance attached to it as a stimulus to faith or as a pleasure to the eye, are amply demonstrated by the fact that the persecution continued so long, and that methods of the utmost violence had to be employed. “ *Nec frangimus nec adoramus* ” was the sensible dictum of Charlemagne. The Iconoclastic heresy was a failure in so far that its extreme doctrines were perforce abandoned, for the crusade was directed against innate and subconscious tendencies which no persecution could eradicate ; but none the less the amount of sculpture actually destroyed must have been gigantic. The art itself was debased, its creators banished, its votaries intimidated. But still more overwhelming was the consequent establishment of an ecclesiastical control, which marked the beginnings of a long and dreary subjection from which the Eastern world has never been emancipated. It is needless to refer at any length to the Canon of art, to the code of laws from which artistic invention could not deviate, beyond saying that these sterilising for-

## 10 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

mulæ have governed composition and design with a harshness and severity, with a narrowness of interpretation, which to this day limits Eastern sculpture and painting to a mean standard of handicraft. Art had to conform to a series of prototypes sanctioned by the hierarchic censorship, and it became the obsolescent art of old men living upon middle-aged ideals ; free-standing sculpture ceased to exist, and bas-relief was restricted to a few poverty-stricken and conventional themes.

RAVENNA.—Iconoclasm in the East synchronised with some measure of growing security in the West and promoted a migration of the producer to the only available markets. Ravenna, one of the most instructive and dramatic cities in Italy, is the Western counterpart of Constantinople, and although her greatness had waned long before the image-breaking persecutions, it is here that one can derive the best idea of the primitive conditions of Italo-Byzantine art. Early in the fifth century the Emperor Honorius established his Court there, and a stimulus to Greek artists was afforded on its capture by Belisarius in 530 ; by the year 600 its pristine importance was at an end. For the following twelve centuries Ravenna has lain outside the turmoil of political activity, while all industrial development was precluded by its receding seaboard ; and accordingly the city preserves eloquent and authentic testimonies of bygone distinction. Though less opulent than Byzantium, Ravenna

seems to reflect the sense of power and conviction, and her buildings, from the megalithic construction known as the Tomb of Theodoric down to the tiny little Baptistry of the Aryans, give the impression of considered stateliness and calm. Nothing could be more dignified than the company of sarcophagi in Sant'Apollinare in Classe. As sculpture their merits are few, owing to a monotonous uniformity of scale and treatment, while meagreness of symbolism and a thin indecisive decoration accentuate the absence of figure work. Nevertheless Sant'Apollinare remains one of the most striking monuments of Christendom, and these tombs are pre-eminent types of frankness, utility, and strength.

NEW SOURCES OF INSPIRATION.—Many problems would be solved if it were possible to analyse the sources whence Ravenna drew her inspiration. Roughly speaking, one may say that up to the year 500, Roman sculpture maintained the traditional use of figures, and that subsequently there was a reversion throughout Italy to representation through symbolic forms, such as prevailed in the pictorial art of the Catacombs. But there was never any tradition of hieroglyphics in the Peninsula, with the result that efforts were frequently made to liberate art from these trammels, and substitutes of various descriptions were devised. It is in these alternative forms that the Eastern artist looked for compensation, when his inventive genius incurred the rude check of Icono-

## 12 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

clasm. By the end of the eighth century a variety of agencies, differing in style and character as well as in religion and ethnology, were gradually beginning to merge themselves into one organic whole. In the first place the craftsmen of the Near East conformed while at home to the new order of sculpture, and even after removing to more tolerant countries, maintained many of their new predilections ; and it would appear that even during the persecution some sculptors continued to work on the old lines for patrons who lived at a distance from the seat of government, and that carved marble continued to be exported in great quantities. San Marco at Venice, that romantic fusion of West and East, must alone possess between seventy and eighty reliefs dating from the ninth century. Whether the familiar monuments found in Italy were finished locally by foreign artists, or whether like the Greek doors in Campania they were despatched from manufactories in Constantinople, we can only surmise. The question is not unimportant : thus it would be useful to know if the capitals at Aix-la-Chapelle, with their evasive likeness to those of San Vitale at Ravenna, were carved on the spot or imported ready-made from Tunis or Asia Minor. The former supposition would of course involve the presence of Eastern artists, and on the whole one can safely deduce from their decisive influence that their numbers were considerable. Italy reflects their diverse tastes in a phenomenal degree.

Costume, incident, and decoration, as displayed on the sculpture of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, direct one's attention to plastic analogies existing all over the world. In costume, for instance, Byzantium effected a revolution. The free and ample toga which survived Imperial Rome is replaced by the long rectilinear tunic—a true product of Byzantium ; and correspondingly a Saint or Apostle who on the Roman sarcophagus is stout, thick-set, and well-favoured, becomes a tall ascetic usually represented in a pose of stiff unyielding immobility. So far the teaching of Byzantium proper was readily acceptable, and indeed admits of no controversy ; but when motive of decoration and incident are examined, the determination of origin becomes highly speculative.

ANIMAL LIFE IN EARLY PLASTIC ART.—How can one account for the prevalence of animal life in these bas-reliefs? From the late Consular diptych, down to the twelfth-century façade of San Michele at Pavia, Northern Italy shows an unbroken taste for hunting-scenes decoratively handled ; and not only for the true hunting-scene, but for less edifying spectacles where the beast of prey is fighting with its peers, or mangling some weak and inoffensive animal. The Ravenna ambone dated 597 is a notable exception, for here the animals (uncouth and clumsy in treatment) are isolated, and form no part of an organised *mélée* ; so also the birds, which normally occupy the angular spaces in a

## 14 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

tympanum or archivolt, are figurative and symbolical, showing a plastic appreciation of silhouette and dimension. The Peacock at Brescia is justly claimed as the masterpiece of eighth-century sculpture. One may perhaps say that such examples as these represent the more Italian phase, while the exciting episodes of animal strife reflect Oriental and Southern extravagance. Moreover the embargo placed upon figure work in Byzantine dominions, must have encouraged the only alternative aspect of movement and life which could incur no suspicion of idolatry. It is to be observed that the animals most frequently employed are exotic, the elephant and lion being especially popular; the latter was by no means confined to symbolical requirements, and the elephant (which reappears as a source of attraction to sculptors of all dates) cannot have been quite unfamiliar to traditional iconography. Elephants ran wild in Mesopotamia as late as the eighth century before Christ, and they were certainly used in the Pyrrhic and subsequent wars. Sculpture, however, chiefly appreciated the nobler animals as suitable engines in the portrayal of strife: that they should fight with ferocity and vigour was all that was asked. In this it is easy to perceive the influence of Far Eastern nations, who it should be observed showed an irresistible tendency to move towards the West. Until checked by the masterful strategy of Charles Martel, an Arab supremacy extended from Karachi as far as Tangier, and even seventy

years after this defeat Haroun-al-Raschid was still a formidable power in the reign of Charlemagne. To Persia and India can be definitely assigned a share in the taste for animal art, even if it be impossible to prove that they supplied the parent inspiration. Meanwhile there was a similar tribute to Southern and Eastern flora, though the palmette had been long acclimatised in Roman sculpture, doubtless based on Egyptian models; but otherwise it is difficult to make inductions as to the influence of Egypt, for monuments of the Christian period are very scarce, everything having been dominated by the earlier civilisation. Asia Minor, Syria, and Salonica, though rich in tombs, can show but little Christian sculpture. Greece, on the other hand, was perhaps originally responsible for the acanthus; but here again as a real force in art Greece was extinct centuries before the great period of Byzantine propaganda, and could only impress her personality by re-action and atavism, or by the medium of Greek artists working under Byzantine control. Thus the great foundations of St. Basil, which must have settled thousands of Greek monks in Italy, may have stimulated the Greek art of the day, but it was an art wholly and absolutely distinct from the pure Hellenic tradition.

DECORATION.—Far more obscure are the origins of decoration proper. When the art of the West substituted symbolical attributes for figure work, and when the iconoclasts denounced everything

## 16 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

which might savour of image worship, plastic enterprise was perforce diverted to alternative enrichments of marble and bronze, which naturally took the form of linear design. Flora and fauna supplied a limited number of motives, but the interlaced scroll and basket-work provided an endless permutation, upon which the principal scheme of decoration was founded. The level of skill attained by artists who could only invest the human frame with simian characteristics was little short of amazing. In the Celtic art of the North as displayed in the Book of Kells, and upon the balustrades and parapets of Venice, Rome, and Constantinople, these orphiomorphic meanderings of line bewilder the eye by their complexity, but are carried with scientific precision to a logical and preordained issue. Yet there is no mechanical monotony in this art, which reached a standard of excellence never subsequently attained: it would appear that all nations were striving towards this ideal of linear enrichment. How the more distant races to whom such influences have been ascribed, were able to impart their lessons to Italy cannot be explained, unless it be shown that portable art—ivories, textiles, or enamels—were sufficient for the purpose. It is, however, certain that carved ivories, for which there was a steady demand from the Caliphs of Spain, as well as the Consular diptychs (which at an earlier period were despatched from post to post), could only teach casual lessons; though Eastern silks clearly furnished

the prototypes of the Western textile trade, and exercised a really crucial function in diffusing Oriental decoration and design. Nevertheless it is hazardous to assume that valuable articles could have been freely transmitted from place to place in the troubled times extending from the year 700 to 1000, that opportunities for thoughtful or prolonged study can have been constant, or indeed that leisure, patronage, or personal wealth was sufficient for the stable development of comprehensive movements.

TRANSMISSION OF NEW ARTISTIC INFLUENCES.—Moreover, when it is argued that form and motive sprang from Central Asia, one is obliged to inquire into the methods of transmission. It is true that the individual artist could move his home from Constantinople to Ravenna; it is equally true that the merchants of Judæa and Phœnicia, using the Mediterranean as trade route, acted as intermediaries between the extreme boundaries of Europe, and had business relations with the Persian Gulf. But neither artist nor merchant could propagate an art with which he was unfamiliar, and specimens of Eastern craftsmanship passing from hand to hand as curiosities or articles of commerce, would be quite insufficient to account for the revolution which Far Eastern ideas have been alleged to produce. If the art really sprang from the Caucasus or the Tartar Steppe, it must have travelled with the race which created it. Nomadic peoples seldom attain the

## 18 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

intellectual vigour or foster the discipline so essential to any permanent advance of art. These tribes wandered successively across the Urals, the Carpathians, and the Alps, because their domestic organisation was not complete enough to enable them to live at home : their preoccupations were concerned with flocks and food, with defence from the hostility of other races whose territories they were occupying ; while their religion was not organised on any established basis, their literature must have been quite elementary, and their architecture was a pure makeshift. A nomadic migration represents a tribal movement; that is to say, a state of ethnical evolution which precedes the city stage, when the aggregation of families is united for common interests, where leisure can exist, and from which an art can emerge. It is difficult to see what living arts can have flourished among the Huns or Goths, for their manual dexterity must have been confined to the axe-head and fibula—to the most humble combinations of utility and decoration.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BARBARIAN INVADERS.—Once settled in the sunny lands of Central Europe, these tribes may have developed into civilised peoples with eagerness and speed. Their technical or artistic influence would then come into play ; but the probabilities are that the older civilisation of Italy, the traditional prestige attaching to the distinguished history of the Peninsula, and the material dignities still per-

taining to the afflicted Empire, would in themselves be of superior force, and might actually be paramount in directing the trend of intellectual opinion among the barbarian conquerors. What impression can have been left on the Lombard mind by the Imperial civilisation of the year 600? Italy was ruined materially, defeated by land in the North, hemmed in along her Southern seaboard by the pirates of Barbary; and yet, notwithstanding disaster and demoralisation, she must still have presented a spectacle of solemn greatness, of grandiose though tarnished magnificence—while she possessed the cardinal asset of which the Northmen soon claimed a share, namely, the all-embracing religion of Christianity. The Lombard, with his Teutonic affinities, was a violent conqueror who may have destroyed much in the moment of victory. Technically his early contribution to plastic art must have been insignificant, but ethically he supplied a certain force of character. Harsh and uncompromising as we suppose him to have been, dark and mysterious as the architecture associated with his name, endowed moreover with a cunning sagacity which had guided his footsteps during the weary sojourns of his nomadic past, the Lombard imparted novel qualities of vigour and determination, perhaps brutal in their directness—but just those impulses which were necessary to re-vitalise the dying embers of Imperial Rome. The continuity of art was threatened. Its preservation was

## 20 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

secured by this unexpected and paradoxical alliance. It is to the Northern invasion that are due the primary motives which enabled Italy to rally to her old standards of thought, which reunited the breaking threads of Roman art. Dimly at first, but afterwards with increasing conviction, the older traditions re-emerged, animated by the wholesome discipline of foreign enthusiasm, and enhanced by the catholicity of exemplar readily welcomed from every quarter. It was a long laborious movement, acquiring strength, suffering drawbacks, developing upon the lines of ordered progress, and maturing gradually through generations of slow evolution.

Thus it comes about that, although our knowledge is still too incomplete to frame any precise definition of the actual processes of development, we can nevertheless detect harmony issuing from contradictory elements, and we can clearly realise the diverse agencies which coalesced to lay the foundations upon which the fabric of Italian sculpture was erected.

## CHAPTER I

### THE INDIGENOUS RUDIMENTS OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

DURING the twelfth century we can detect the indigenous rudiments of Italian sculpture; that is to say, of an art growing less dependent upon Oriental influences, while detaching itself from the traditions of palæo-Christian form. Society became more settled; wealth was increasing, and with a relative sense of security a larger sphere was unfolded to the sculptor, who began to devote his energies to the embellishment of a progressive architecture which in itself demanded more generous and varied decoration. The entrance to the church became the chief centre of attraction. Porch lintel and the door itself, required a robust and plastic treatment, involving the use of bronze, stone, and marble; thus largely superseding the earlier styles of sculpture, which were more closely analogous to the art of the jeweller and silversmith. This primitive Renaissance can be observed throughout Italy, and it is especially in the North that notable progress was achieved.

## 22 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

It might be thought paradoxical to apply such a term to the gaunt and forbidding figures on the Cathedral façade of Modena<sup>1</sup> (fig. 2); but these clumsy scenes from Genesis, particularly Cain killing Abel, and the curious representation of the Ark, display some sense of composition and desire for pictorial effect, which mark an advance from those isolated hieratic figures so common under Byzantine influence. At Modena the pendulous feet, the ungainly hands, and the dull countenances lack technical skill as well as the faculty of observation; but their decisive interest in this connection is that here the incident replaces the *εἰκόν*. The reliefs inside the Cathedral<sup>2</sup> are later in date and more ambitious in scope. The large Cenacolo is the most remarkable (fig. 3). The figures are arranged with an evenness bordering on monotony; the folds of the tablecloth form a geometrical pattern, continued by the lower drapery of the Apostles' garments. The figures look as though they were standing, and there are few more uncouth versions of foreshortening than that indicated by the projecting knees. Allowing for differences in beard and hair, the faces are identical —everywhere we see the same peculiar hawklike

<sup>1</sup> These reliefs, which date from the last years of the eleventh century, are signed by Nicholas and William.

<sup>2</sup> They used to form the parapet of the crypt. This was probably dismantled in the fifteenth century, and the reliefs, of which there are nearly 40 feet run, are now dispersed throughout the Cathedral.



FIG. 2

SCENES FROM GENESIS, MODENA CATHEDRAL.



FIG. 3

CINACOLO, MODENA.



FIG. 4

DEPOSITION, B. ANTELLAMI, PARMA



nose. Yet the relief again shows progress in the actual treatment of the stone, which responds more readily to the chisel. At Verona<sup>1</sup> and Ferrara<sup>2</sup> the reliefs are more extensive and serve to clothe the flat spaces on either side of the doorway, preparing the way for the great achievements of a later date where the architecture and sculpture are inextricably associated. We see in fact the first scheme of the highly decorated façade, and though the effort is tentative, the effect, especially at San Zeno, is pleasing. The sculpture is much more vigorous; movement and expression are more truthfully rendered, and some of the scenes—such, for instance, as where Theodoric hunts with the Devil—show quite a dramatic emphasis.

From 1150 onwards a similar movement was in progress in Central Italy. At Pisa, Lucca, Pistoja, Barga, Groppoli, and to a lesser degree at Florence, there survive many examples of this period; and the fact that most of them are in good condition, and that many are both signed and dated, defines the state of plastic art with precision. There are at least a hundred such pieces from which we may draw deductions, though they only represent a small fraction of the work which must once have existed, to be replaced later on as their style was pronounced archaic. This sculpture, like the reliefs at Modena already described, is employed for practical purposes, and no effort whatever is made as at San Zeno to

<sup>1</sup> At San Zeno.

<sup>2</sup> Duomo.

## 24 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

harmonise bas-relief with architecture. In certain cases there are fonts<sup>1</sup> and pulpits,<sup>2</sup> but generally the architrave of church doors received most attention. The chief sculptors whose names have been preserved are Gruamons, Adeodatus, Enricus, Rodolfino, Biduinus, and Bonusamicus.<sup>3</sup> It cannot be said that their work shows much skill. Knowledge of the structure of the human form is absent, and notwithstanding an occasional proof of a developed sense of decoration,<sup>4</sup> it is not easy to ascribe merit to this group of artists. Their work is sincere enough, simplicity being the ruling characteristic,<sup>5</sup> and there is a total absence

<sup>1</sup> E.g. San Frediano, Lucca, by one Roberto about 1150. This marble font, which is 10 feet in diameter, shows traces of early Christian influence. It is one of the most ambitious plastic works of the twelfth century.

<sup>2</sup> Bargi, Grigio d'Arezzo, San Leonardo, Florence.

<sup>3</sup> Gruamons made the architrave of the north door of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma, about 1150, with the assistance of Adeodatus, his brother, the architect of the Santi Andrea e Pistola. The capitals supporting this architrave were the work of Enrico. Biduinus signed the architrave of the door of San Salvatore (now the Museo di Santa Croce) at Lucca, curious specimens of the style of St. Neopas, the earliest date 1158. At San Cassiano, at Vicenza, he made the doorway of the apse, with scenes relating to the destruction of the city, in white marble. But some time later he made the smooth altar frontal of the church of Santa Maria in Campi, Sesto di Pistoia. Rodolfino carved the pulpit of San Bartolomeo in Parma, at least 1177, while still a apprentice, so only 18 years old at the fashioning of the job.<sup>6</sup> Other works of the late twelfth century will be found at San Michele, Lucca; and in the Sacra Sindone, Pavia; Assisi, legate of Diocletian; and in the Bargi, two greats in the earlier style, about 1177.

<sup>4</sup> One of the most famous types is a canopy by Vassalletto at San Paolo, Fano, showing the Virgin and the Christ Child in the architrave of Sant'Andrea, Pistoia, and another by him in San Michele, Lucca.

<sup>5</sup> This inclination of exponents is certain, and personages dates back to the earliest art. The greatest masterpiece at San Marco, Venice, showing





FIG. 5.

ANNUNCIATION, BARGA.



FIG. 7.

BRONZE DOOR, BONANNO, PISA.



FIG. 6.

ANNUNCIATION, GUIDO DA COMO, PISTOJA.

of superfluities in personnel and incident. This simplicity may be calculated, fortuitous, or possibly caused by details being unobserved; but by limiting itself to what is strictly relevant the interest of the spectator is concentrated upon the essentials, and is not distracted by collateral scenes. It is the principle upon which the *Biblia pauperum* were compiled, suiting the technical skill of the artist to the humble learning of the public. The scenes portrayed are moreover identified by carved explanations, even for such obvious events as the Annunciation or the Nativity—a practice which continued for long afterwards. These inscriptions are almost invariable on the pulpits of this date. Being sheltered from the elements their actual carving, and, for the period, the amount of luxury in their decoration, received more care than was devoted to external sculpture.

BENEDETTO ANTELAMI.—Pulpits of this date are all worth study, varying in treatment from the elaborated Annunciation at Barga (fig. 5) to a most uncouth and barbaric specimen of Italian sculpture to be seen at Groppoli: this is dated 1194, and forms a significant contrast with contemporary work in the Province of Emilia. At Parma the masterpieces of Benedetto Antelami are preserved;

the translation of the saint's body, the city of Alexandria is figured as a pitched roof supported by two thin columns—an ideograph which fulfils its allotted task. Cf. the representation of the "high place" on the panel depicting the temptation of Christ on the bronze door by Bonanno at Pisa (fig. 7); dramatic solitude could scarcely be more tersely expressed.

## 26 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

and the façade of the Cathedral at Borgo San Donnino, executed under his influence if not supervision, supplies an invaluable sample of early ideas of plastic decoration. Antelami is the greatest Italian artist of the twelfth century. His limitations are obvious; animation is indicated by movement, the emotions are few, and he avoids those which cannot be readily signalised by facial expression. Thus his scale of variety is restricted, and many subjects would be entirely beyond his power of analysis. He lacked monuments of the past and their lessons, while no stimulus could be derived from his contemporaries. He must have been a self-taught man, working almost in isolation, and gradually freeing himself from the stiff formality of his earliest style. The Deposition (fig. 3)<sup>1</sup> is a work of extreme interest, showing the survival of Byzantine influences in the somewhat elongated forms; but already there is a vigorous sense of drama, particularly noticeable in the group of four seated figures examining the seamless tunic. His subsequent works consist of reliefs applied to the Baptistry at Parma<sup>2</sup>; they are nearly

<sup>1</sup> Doubtless the parapet of a pulpit: dated 1178. It is now fixed to a wall within the Cathedral. This relief is about 7 feet long, and it is quite possible that three stone capitals now in the town museum may have formed part of this pulpit.

<sup>2</sup> They are chiefly connected with the three doorways—lunettes, architraves, and pilasters; the north side is perhaps the finest, where the doorposts are carved with Biblical genealogies, executed with much feeling for decorative values. Had Antelami lived another twenty years he might have converted the actual courses and pillars into upright figures—the motive which confers such dignity upon the French portals

twenty years later than the Deposition, and although still evangelical in the sense of allowing but little play to invention and fancy, a marked progress is visible. The disposition of the figures is more natural ; they take their places and play their parts without much effort or hesitation. Here lies the real achievement of Antelami, who quite apart from his ethical qualities was among the first to disengage the incident and to avoid the clumsiness of his contemporaries, who not only overcrowded their scenes, but placed their figures pell-mell in utter confusion. Moreover Antelami must have modelled in clay before carving the stone : it is doubtful if some of his contemporaries can have taken this simple and obvious precaution, judging from the fact that their reliefs are scratched into the stone rather than modelled out of it. The altar at Pisa and the Groppoli pulpit resemble carvings in bone more than bas-reliefs in marble ; and although it is difficult to believe that Bonus-amicus worked free-hand with no more guidance than that afforded by drawings on the stone, the fact remains that the length of numberless

of this period. In addition to the doorways at Parma there are figures of virtues in niches ; and a long series of medallions surrounds the Baptistry representing ikonic animals, less or more imaginary, together with a few portrait busts ; all carved in Rosso da Verona, which since the twelfth century has acquired the patina of old bronze. Inside the building a series of reliefs which were dug up near the Cathedral fifty years ago have been placed in the long gallery. Though not by Benedetto they are good examples of the current style. The highly finished bust of St. Peter, purchased in 1881 for the Lyons Museum, is later in date and cannot be properly ascribed to Antelami.

## 28 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

inscriptions of this period, both in sculpture and architecture, was hopelessly miscalculated—showing at any rate that, so far as script was concerned, little heed was paid to symmetry or precision.

BORGO SAN DONNINO.—The chief interest of the façade at Borgo San Donnino arises from the relation of the sculpture to the architecture. The sculpture proper embraces the three projecting portals and their intervening spaces, but only extends half-way up the frontispiece (fig. 10). Incomplete though the scheme is, the broad eaves which divide the upper from the lower portions have provided an efficient shelter from the elements. The large statues are sunk in niches, and give scale to the decoration, while a number of reliefs drawn from the life and miracles of the patron saint give variety and incident. Many scraps of sculpture are fixed into the wall here and there, apparently without any particular reason. But notwithstanding a good deal of patchwork there is a specific scheme, and whole sections of the façade seem to have been left at the sculptor's disposal. Yet neither here nor elsewhere can the sculpture be said to play a predominant part: the plastic art of this date was never fully emancipated, and although there is fertile invention, and occasionally decided charm, the sculpture remained subsidiary, without the effective co-operation of the two arts.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> THIRTEENTH-CENTURY FAÇADES.—The façade of San Michele at Pavia (fig. 9), though at least forty years earlier, is of special importance

FARADYS, FIGS. 8-13.  
To face p. 28.

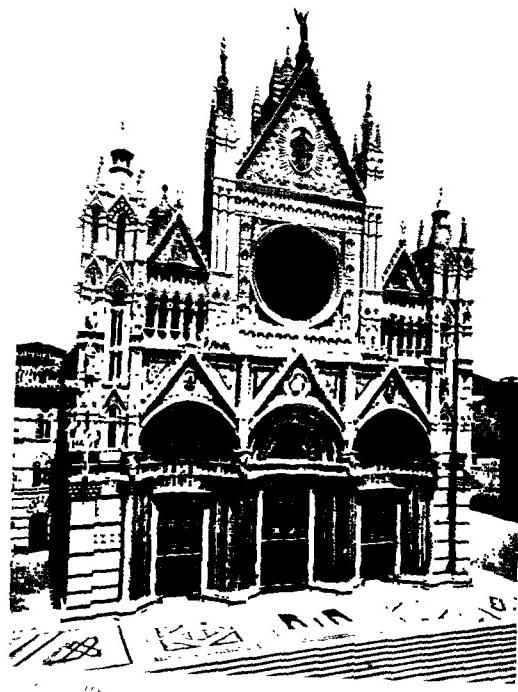


FIG. 8. SIENA CATHEDRAL.

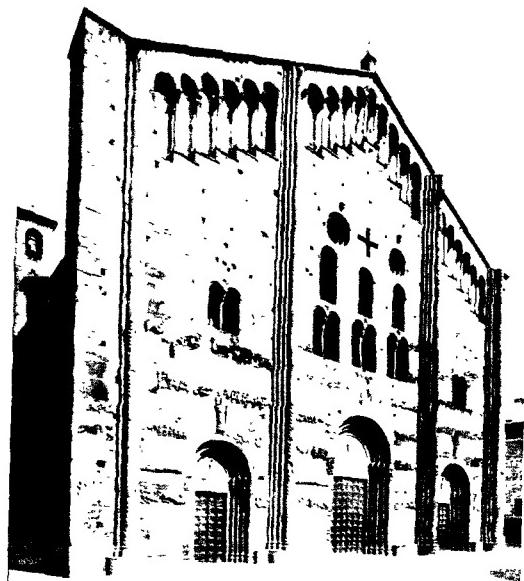


FIG. 9. SAN MICHELE, PAVIA.



FIG. 10. CATHEDRAL, BORGO SAN DONNINO.

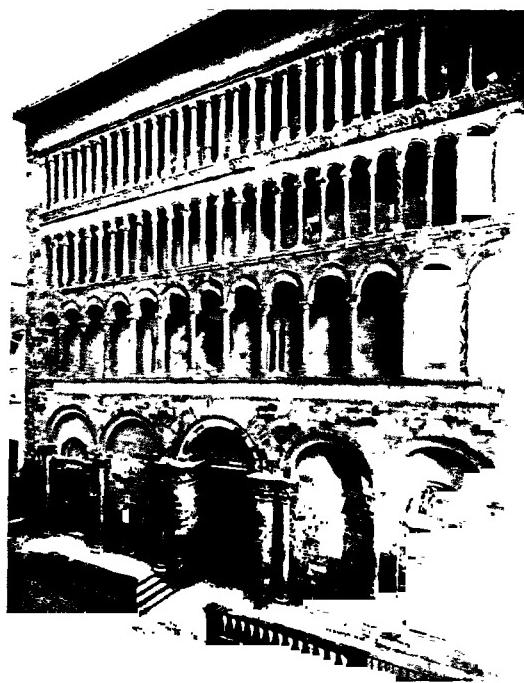


FIG. II. SANTA MARIA, AREZZO.



FIG. 12. SAN MICHELE, LUCCA



FIG. 13. CATHEDRAL, PISA.

To face p. 29.

## THE BRONZE DOOR.—While Tuscany and the North were decorating their doorways, Southern

in this connection, because though the sculpture is both primitive in execution and shows poverty of invention (largely consisting of scenes from bestiaries), it is none the less disposed in such a manner as to indicate a working agreement between sculptor and architect, together with an identity of materials, in itself marking a significant progress. The flatness of the surface involved by the absence of porches and the somewhat shallow windows, not only gave an opportunity for a comprehensive scheme of plastic decoration, but almost made such a treatment necessary. Five courses of frieze extend right across the front at varying heights: they are now seriously decayed, the stone having been worn away as much as eighteen inches in certain places. The dull grey colour of these Pavian churches is relieved by the insertion of bright majolica plaques into the masonry (the best examples being at San Michele, San Teodoro, and San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro). This system of linear or horizontal decoration of façades survived long, though the sculptured frieze was often replaced by variegated marbles. A tentative stage prevailed at Genoa, where certain façades (*e.g.* Santo Stefano and San Matteo) are traversed by broad bands of carved inscriptions placed like the reliefs at Pavia. This treatment was too capricious, and the horizontal decoration then took the form of alternating rows of coloured marbles, of which numberless examples exist both in the northern and central parts of Italy. During the twelfth and early part of the thirteenth centuries there was a concurrent development of façades in a wholly opposite direction, the governing theme being rows of upright pilasters. The most obvious examples are at Pistoja, Pisa, Lucca, and Arezzo. These tiers of columns were unsuited for monumental sculpture, but afforded endless opportunities for inscriptions, bas-reliefs, and subsidiary carving. The pillars themselves and their capitals are treated with bewildering variety, so much so indeed, that they cease to be pillars, and become climbing and interlaced groups of animals, while many are decorated with Pietra-Dura-like intarsia, or with geometrical patterns which are somewhat harassing to the eye. At Pisa there is restraint (fig. 13); but at Lucca *l'industriosa* there is a palpable opulence both in the material employed and in the wealth of its incrustation; the theme too is overdone, notably in such cases as San Michele, where the front is overtopped by two extra tiers of columns which tower above the nave, and are not justified by or requisite for the architectural structure of the building. At Pistoja the façade is not

## 30 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

Italy devoted still more attention to the doors themselves. Real strong doors were necessary, for there was a constant dread of raids by the Barbary pirates, and the experience of previous invasions by more civilised peoples accounts for the frequency of massive, armoured doors. They were, in short, a necessity. Being of great weight, scarcely moveable, and fashioned in such a way as to prevent their adaptation to other purposes, a large number of examples have survived. They afford the only important specimens of bronze casting to be found in Italy during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Their origin was Eastern. The doors of Monte Gargano are signed by Staurakios, who adds that he executed them at Constantinople.<sup>1</sup> Other doors by the same artist

merely the show front of the church, but it also governs the whole scheme, or rather provides its culminating aspect. There is more reserve, less display; the architecture controls its own decoration, and with less material wealth a more notable result is achieved. There is great charm in these colonnaded façades: the bronzed surface of the marble, of which unlimited supplies were drawn from the neighbourhood, together with a sense of interior derived from the cool broken shadows cast by the *loggia*, convey an impression of homeliness and repose. But by 1250 the limit of evolution was attained; no further development was possible. There was too much carving and too little sculpture. The columnar façade excluded inventive work on a large scale, whether pictorial or plastic, and moreover it was inconsistent with the great windows demanded for the increasing scale of churches. Enfranchisement from the columnar ideal of church façades had to precede the great masterpieces of Siena and Orvieto (figs. 8.)

<sup>1</sup> At the Church of San Michele. The doors are dated 1076. It was also at this date that Desiderius of Monte Cassino sent his envoys to Constantinople for a selection of Church plate and ornaments.

are numerous, and it is of interest to note that successive members of the Amalfitan family of Pantaleone seem to have had a passion for presenting bronze doors to local churches, and employed the Greek artist on every occasion. The names of six Italian craftsmen have come down to us, but they are all subsequent to the eleventh century. Roger of Amalfi made the doors at Canossa perhaps about 1120. At Troja there are two pairs by Oderisco da Benevento 1119 and 1127, while Barisanus of Trani signed the doors in his native town 1175, and others at Ravello 1179, and Monreale (the north door) 1185. Very curious and reserved are the two pairs in the Lateran Basilica, the work of the brothers Hubert and Peter of Piacenza,<sup>1</sup> northern craftsmen who certainly were not influenced by the ultramontane style of the archaic doors of San Zeno at Verona.<sup>2</sup> Bonnanno of Pisa signed the west door at Monreale 1186, and the small door at Pisa Cathedral (circa 1180), a larger pair of the same period having been unfortunately destroyed by the conflagration of 1596. Other examples of the eleventh century are preserved at San Marco Venice, 1085, at

<sup>1</sup> The pair leading out of the cloister is entirely without decoration except for a row of studded stars; the prominence of the signature on a level with the eye is singular. The doors in the Baptistry are engraved.

<sup>2</sup> Part of this doorway must be of German or Swiss origin, but it is far less skilful than the eleventh-century bronzes at Augsburg or Hildesheim. This former door is one of the few in which symmetrical arrangement is deliberately disregarded.

### 32 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

Salerno, and Monte Sant' Angelo. The bronze doors of Ostia and Benevento, and the second door at San Marco, were erected during the following century. Interesting as this large group of sculpture is, it none the less forms an isolated episode in the history of Italian art; it does not spring from indigenous roots, and is equally detached from the portals subsequently made by Andrea Pisano, Ghiberti, and other artists of the later Renaissance. These early examples were without influence upon the development of bas-relief: the pictorial designs were largely derived from ivories, and their decoration not only betrays the influence of Constantinople, but Syrian forms are not uncommon. Being bought ready-made, or else ordered in the East—with which these Southern townships had close commercial relations—there is an element of industrialism in the frequent repetition of scenes, identical plaques being found on different doors. The inscriptions were usually in Greek, engraved with silver niello. Some of these doors, analogous to our English “brasses,” were wholly without relief, the entire design being formed by incisions into which silver was hammered. The effect is dignified, and this application of a dainty art to monumental sculpture perished all too soon.

Southern sculpture in marble of this period is conceived on a pretty large scale,<sup>1</sup> but its merits

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the large pulpit at Moscufo decorated with stucco, about 1160, by Nicodemus. There is another at Pianella (? by Acuto), and a third

do not repay study as much as the architecture and mosaics. The settlement of Sicily under the Norman Kings checked the Mussulman tendency of decoration, while the erection of cloisters gave a great impetus to the carving of historiated capitals.<sup>1</sup> By the beginning of the thirteenth century well-defined schools were actively engaged all over Southern Italy, and it is in their productions that proof must be sought for the attractive but unacceptable theory that Niccolo Pisano was of Southern extraction.<sup>2</sup>

GROWING DEMAND FOR SCULPTURE.—The output of sculpture at this date must have been considerable throughout the Peninsula if it

at San Vittorino by Pietrus Amabilis. There is a really fine episcopal throne at Canossa.

<sup>1</sup> They cast an important sidelight upon the history of sculpture. They correspond to the illuminated initial letters of Breviary or Psalter ; in either case the artist was allowed a freedom not permissible in the formal scene of narrative or devotion. The hieratic canon was not observed. The initial letter and the capital alike afforded endless opportunities for what was fantastic or grotesque, as well as for those incidental notes which are so valuable as illustrating costume and social life. The capitals of the little columns which supported the cloister roof had only to carry an insignificant burden, and the actual cloister was seldom enlarged ; the small capital, from its size and form, was useless for other purposes : thus there are still many thousand specimens of this early carving. A Corpus of carved capitals would be of much service to the student. The larger capitals on the big columns within the churches are more architectural in their treatment, and though significant, are of less interest from the point of view of figure carving.

<sup>2</sup> The clearest exposition of the view that he was of Apulian birth and training will be found in Crowe and Cavalcaselle, and in an article (*Nineteenth Century*, April 1896) by Mr. Crowe, who had the advantage of approaching the problem from a standpoint unbiased by local Italian patriotism. The problem remains one of great complexity.

corresponded in any degree with the immense development of building. The eloquent complaint of St. Bernard, who died as early as 1153, points in unmistakeable fashion to the growing appreciation of sculpture; and although he was writing to the French, his remarks can be legitimately applied to the rapid growth of Italian art. He thinks it useless to protest against the size of churches,<sup>1</sup> but he inveighs indiscriminately against all forms of decoration—casting ridicule upon the alleged symbolism concealed beneath the guise of bestiaries; and he finally denounces the general preference of carvings to holy writ, indicating clearly enough that in his belief the former were hindrances to genuine religion.<sup>2</sup> His attack is almost fanatical, and it fell upon deaf ears. Circumstances were too strong to prevent the extension of church decoration. Italy, as already pointed out, was settling down; ethnological differences were gradually merging themselves, while the predominance of the *lingua volgare* was solving the language problem. The half-century which preceded the appearance of Niccolo Pisano's pulpit enjoyed relative peace; and after prolonged sufferings and disorder, the inherent wealth of Italian soil, together with the advantages derived from her geographical position, began to reassert

<sup>1</sup> "Omitto oratoriorum immensas altitudines, immoderatas longitudines, supervacuas latitudines." ("Patrologia," 184, col. 914.)

<sup>2</sup> "Magis legere libeat in marmoribus quam in codicibus, totumque diem occupare singula ista mirando, quam in lege Dei meditando." (*Ibid.*)

their influence. Municipalities founded their public buildings, extended their city boundaries, and erected fountains, while the Church responded to the revival promoted by the orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic. Pulpits and shrines—symptomatic of popular religious fervour—and tombs which connoted the increase of private wealth, began to multiply ; the number of new churches which were built would alone account for the stimulus to the art of sculpture which was so great at this period.

## CHAPTER II

### PROGRESS OF FORM

AT the same time precise knowledge is deficient in many directions; for example, it so happens that the earliest dates recorded in connection with certain sculptors are precisely the dates of their masterpieces. Careful training and an extensive output must have preceded the pulpit of Niccolo Pisano (1260), the first authenticated work of Guido da Como at Pistoja (1250), and Fra Guglielmo's share in the famous shrine of San Domenico at Bologna (1267). Yet, in spite of conjecture and diligent research, we are obliged to begin our studies of such men by examining the work of their maturity; thus it comes about that a survey of the period must be somewhat general in character. But from this time onwards the personality of the artist begins to emerge.

NICCOLO PISANO.—Obscure as the early life of Niccolo Pisano is, we can separate him from his contemporaries, trace the influence of his teaching, and even to some extent reconstruct the environment within which he worked. One must at the outset combat the view that Niccolo

was a prodigy, an upheaval. It is true enough that in comparison with his immediate predecessors—Gruamons, for instance, or Rodolfino—his advent was almost that of a portent; certainly, among such stammering craftsmen, Niccolo was more sensational than was Bernini in his own brilliant generation. But the more carefully one examines the forerunners of Niccolo, the more clearly does one see that he represents the final outcome of secular tradition and development. He is the lineal descendant of the last of the sarcophagi; he represents the final fruition of Roman art. Throughout the long centuries of what are called the “dark ages”—centuries which, under modern investigation, could now more aptly be termed “dim”—there had been continuity in the art traditions of the later Roman empire. Plague, pestilence, famine, wars, and persecution never succeeded in uprooting the old ideas; for generations their traces are faint, and indeed often seem to have disappeared. But the spirit survived even if its outward form seemed to perish; and much of the Byzantine influence so-called, was in reality Roman feeling which had migrated Eastwards with Constantine, and which returned later on clothed in Oriental garb, and revitalised by contact with new life and younger civilisations. Niccolo Pisano felt these particular influences, but to a lesser degree than some of his predecessors, certainly much less than the artists engaged in architecture, jewellery, and painting,—

### 38 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

his own prototypes being more directly derived from Roman art as it survived in Italy itself. It is well known that in at least half a dozen cases he frankly copied figures from antique sculptures, while the classical scenes and allusions on the Perugia fountain are essentially Roman in character. Apart from actual copies of classical statuary, his preference for drapery based upon the Roman toga, the crowded scheme of his composition, and the stumpiness of individual figures, combine to indicate the unmistakeable tendency of his tastes. It is, however, needful to be on one's guard against the view that he deliberately revived the imitation of the classical Roman period, or that his Christian ideas were subservient to pagan form. Niccolo Pisano was no plagiarist. Copying *qua* copying is not of necessity wrong; in any case it often secured a starting point towards better things. To have chosen the right exemplar and then to have copied it, might in certain cases prove the hand of genius; moreover, there is a common stock of art belonging to the whole world, and if Niccolo Pisano is to be charged with plagiarism, his impeachment must be shared by Dante, Shakespeare, and Michael Angelo.<sup>1</sup> While Niccolo's

<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile a concurrent survival of Roman art was noticeable in the dominions of Frederick II., or, rather, it would be more accurate to call it a revival. This Suabian Emperor was profoundly imbued with the dignity of his imperial position, and determined to be a Cæsar opposed to the dominance of Papal rule. He was a great builder, and founded a series of provincial capitals and castles to establish his position. His coins, his search for classical antiquities, and the decoration of his palaces (now dilapidated) were prompted quite as much by

debt to classical antiquity is incontestable, it is equally clear that the influences of the Near East passed by him unheeded. Occasionally we find reminiscences of Byzantine art in his treatment of capitals, in the prevalent appreciation of exotic beasts forming the support of pillars, and now and again in the linear decoration of incrusted marbles. At Siena there is a relief of Abundantia which must be derived from some ivory—a Consular diptych perhaps. These details are, however, only noteworthy as exceptions, and small ones.

NICCOLO PISANO AND GOTHIC INFLUENCES.—The real outstanding problem about Niccolo Pisano is his relation with the Gothic art of the thirteenth century; and the problem is well-nigh insoluble. It is approached from so many standpoints, and with such varied motives, that the very terms employed have to be analysed before any deduction can be accepted. The object of some controversialists is to prove that what is called Gothic

political as by æsthetic considerations. Everything had to contribute to the magnificence and pomp of his exalted position; for a time his energetic and masterful zeal almost suppressed local influences, Basilian and Saracenic. The surviving monuments of the period are few: particularly notable is the portrait of Pietro della Vigna at Capua (fig. 35)—a ghost of the late empire—and a very beautiful “Mater ecclesiae,” a grave classical figure draped with the studded jewels of Byzantium. This is at Ravello, and from its position on the pulpit has been miscalled Sigilgaita, the wife of the donor; the Berlin Museum has a small bust of the period. The Hohenstaufen revival was short-lived. The return to classical type was artificial, the whim of a powerful foreigner; lacking spontaneity, it proved abortive, and died out with the dynasty which created it.

## 40 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

art is a French importation, introduced by the Cistercians, although the fine churches built by that order were generally situated in remote and inaccessible country districts. The Cistercian influence was moreover soon dispelled by the orders of St. Francis. There can of course be no doubt that Northern influence was exercised in Italy. Commercial pursuits, the frequent embassies which crossed the Alps, and the passion for pilgrimages,<sup>1</sup> kept up a constant intercourse between North and South. Works of art which were easily portable, such as wooden statuettes, the enamels of Limoges and the Rhine, together with small ivories illustrating secular scenes—all of which attained to unrivalled excellence in the thirteenth century—must have been perfectly familiar to Italians. In Piedmont and Lombardy there were masterpieces of Northern art like the superb bronze candelabrum now in Milan Cathedral, and references to artists with Swiss and Germanic names are by no means uncommon. The term Gothic not only connotes pointed and perpendicular architecture, but still more the Northern spirit. The cardinal feature of Gothic form, namely the pointed or ogival arch, was unreservedly adopted by Niccolo Pisano; but he was far less susceptible to those manifestations of Gothic art which we associate with the Northern temperament. It is needful to discept between the dual aspect of

<sup>1</sup> During the Jubilee year of 1300 there were never less than 200,000 pilgrims in Rome. Villani, viii. 36.

Gothic influence. That indicated by the outward form is obviously capable of minute analysis ; but a definition of Gothic with its easy stiffness, its love of the grotesque and its halting realisms, is well-nigh impossible. Why was Dante Gothic in this respect, and Ariosto the true Italian ? To what causes must we attribute the wiry Gothic figures of Dürer or Massaccio ? On the other hand we might ask why Mantegna took his forms from the classical Renaissance while permeated with true Gothic sentiment. In spite of analogies which in certain cases border on identities, Niccolo Pisano and his great contemporaries who fashioned the portals of Chartres and Amiens remain poles asunder ; in any case it is impossible to merge them under the single category of Gothic. The term is too general and conveys too many aspects of a vast international movement. Italian Gothic as we see it at Orvieto, Assisi, or Santa Croce, was really national architecture, imbued, that is to say, with ideas and forms inseparable from Italian soil. Elsewhere the masterpieces of Gothic architecture were to some extent cosmopolitan. Cologne Cathedral might well be at Lincoln, Amiens at Strassburg or at Winchester ; but Italian Gothic would be exotic if transported to Picardy or Wessex. Similarly, Gothic art took its own line in Spain, a hot country full of Moorish and Visigothic survivals : the development was in sympathy with the climate, more full-blooded than in Italy, and it ended in a posi-

## 42 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

tive riot of flamboyant luxuriance. The national character of Italian Gothic is shown in their love of colour obtained by means of variegated marbles, used as a constructive element, as opposed to the polychromacy obtained elsewhere by paint. Again they seem to have regretted the loss of horizontal lines; and their reluctance to make churches so lofty as to exclude figure painting from the vaults, prevented them from grasping the mysterious capabilities of clerestory, flying buttress, and triforium.

Thus it comes about that Italian Gothic was never considered indigenous: it was called a foreign barbarous art, reminiscent of conquest and humiliation.<sup>1</sup> It was the spirit rather than

<sup>1</sup> Nothing could better illustrate the paradox of the term Gothic than the fact that with one breath we call Nicolas V. a Goth for having destroyed old St. Peter's, while Gothic is our generic definition of the most majestic creations of Western architecture. During the High Renaissance (the word Gothic not having been used in Niccolo Pisano's time), we find something akin to personal hostility towards Gothic art, because it was supposed to be fundamentally foreign. It must be observed that this attitude was that of the historian and critic rather than of the craftsman (an exception being made for Filarete). Ghiberti was an avowed admirer of an unnamed German sculptor. In 1490 it was proposed to hold a competition for a façade to the Florentine Cathedral; the old one was incomplete, and although furnished with sculpture by first-rate men, Albertini, not a violent partisan, called it "*senza ordine e misura*"; and the preamble of the document dealing with its reconstruction says the façade is illogical and erring against the canons of architectural taste. Then again Lasca praises Donatello for having reformed sculpture: Donatello "*messe la scultura nel dritto sentier ch'era smarrita, cosi l'architettura storpiata, e guasta alle man'de' Tedeschi.*" It was this German aspect which annoyed the critics. Milizia complains of its corrupt influence; the Anonimo Morelliano says that the Cathedral of Milan is full of faults because it was begun in the German

its outward forms which animated Italian artists for generations to come. Niccolo Pisano, in spite of his antecedents and his affinities towards the sarcophagi, was no longer retrospective. His classical tastes grew less marked with advancing years ; and although it was his son Giovanni who created an enfranchised art, Niccolo was the pioneer who re-created the secure foundations upon which progress was based. His greatness lies in the fact that he first realised the obligation of inquiry and research, and therefore we first find analysis in his work. He did much by his two pulpits (not to speculate from his architecture) in fixing the somewhat fluid elements of taste, and he also established the pictorial aspect of certain biblical scenes.<sup>1</sup> “ Every school contemplative and style. Vasari’s eloquence led him far in denouncing the monstrous structures which had infected the whole world. Scarcely one good word will be found for the art, though Pius II. wished to erect a Gothic church at Pienza modelled upon “ *exemplar (quod) apud Germanos in Austria vidisset,* ” when travelling in his early days. These denunciations of Gothic form were however fruitless. They came a century too late, long after the rich harvest had been reaped in the varied schools of Verona, Tuscany, Naples, and Venice ; in Rome, excluding the Cosmati, pseudo-classic traditions were too strong for the German art to secure a firm foothold.

<sup>1</sup> FIXATION OF TYPE.—The earliest efforts to fix the types of biblical scenes and personages are naturally to be found in the Catacombs ; but the only permanent type created in those remote ages was that of St. Peter, doubtless based on a traditional portrait ; and it is the only figure that has continued immutable throughout the history of Italian art. The youthful and serene Christ of the early tombs and ivories did not outlive the twelfth century. The Apostles, like the Old Testament prophets, were too numerous to characterise, symbols and scrolls being necessary for their identification. David as the slayer of Goliath varied with the taste of the moment, which interpreted his action as that of

#### 44 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

dramatic must in the first instance trace back its pedigree to Niccolo Pisano" (Lord Lindsay, ii. 115). The direct Pisan influence was in one sense short-lived, because the demand for work by his pupils and *entourage* was so great that it involved the establishment of local schools in various parts of Italy. Balduccio settled in Milan. Arnolfo di Cambio is responsible for the epoch-making tomb of Cardinal de Braye at Orvieto: he also worked in Rome. Giovanni Pisano lived several years at Siena, Fra Guglielmo at Pistoja, and later on Tino da Camaino provided the connecting link

shepherd, hero, or athlete. David the psalmist, like Moses the law-giver, and St. John of the Revelation, acquired a certain characteristic pose, conveyed by dignified maturity. Such persons as St. Mary of Egypt, or St. Anthony the Hermit, were always portrayed in the halo of squalid dress and surroundings. St. Mary Magdalen, on the other hand, was a creation of the artist—haggard or prosperous, penitent or the reverse, according to the prevailing standard of social and religious thought. The accepted type of St. Sebastian (one of Diocletian's brigadiers) is also due to the interpretation of art, becoming from the fifteenth century onwards a recognised medium for the display of anatomical skill (figs. 64-67). The saints canonised in more recent times, Francis of Assisi, Dominic, Catherine of Siena, etc., had their own types from their first appearance on the altar-piece. It cannot be said that Niccolo Pisano contributed to this standardisation; his influence was rather in the direction of codifying the biblical scene. The task was more complex; and the primitive Church, without precedent or analogies for illustrating the Bible—a foreign book—contented itself with much symbolism and the minimum of personnel. Niccolo Pisano enriched the scenes immensely, by insisting in the first place upon the full complement of participants, while he enhanced the life and movement of the whole composition by adding spectators and accessories. The principle thus clearly laid down lasted for two hundred years, until the great men of the High Renaissance, particularly the painters, again simplified their compositions, concentrating on the main theme by the elimination of unessential incident.



FIG. 14

SHRINE OF ST. PETER MARTYR - BALDUCCIO - MILAN



between Pisa and Naples. Their art is in all cases Tuscan in origin rather than Romanesque, and notwithstanding technical doubts and hesitations, all these men are conscious of their power. They do not show painful efforts in groping after effects; they are self-reliant. Sculpture had become a recognised asset of devotion. The sculptor was carefully trained, and the *bottega* was called into existence by the enrolment of numerous *garzoni* and *disipoli* with whose help large and ambitious works were rapidly executed.<sup>1</sup> By 1300

<sup>1</sup> STATUS OF THE SCULPTOR.—As the art of sculpture became a recognised vocation, the organisation of guilds and corporations laid down certain standards of work and fixed scales of remuneration. But although we have many documents on the subject our knowledge is less exact than in the analogous records about painters. A few pictorial representations of the art of sculpture exist, such as on the sarcophagus at Urbino, the bas-reliefs on the Campanile at Florence, and at Or San Michele. It is probable that the social status of the sculptor was never quite so high as that of the painter, still less than that of the professors and literati who achieved the most worldly successes. In many cases he was little more than a stone-mason engaged upon the minor function of carving doors, window frames, and pilasters—of which the consummate craftsmanship is now recognised, though in the day of their production the work was purely industrial. But even prominent men such as Meo del Caprino and Giuliano da San Gallo were employed under Pius II. like journeymen, being paid for cutting blocks of Travertine at so much a *braccia* (see documents in Papal accounts. Muntz, ii. 58). Michael Angelo wasted precious months at Carrara doing similar work. The fact is that until a relatively late period the sculptor was quite a humble person, occupying a subordinate position at the board of his patron and receiving payment in kind as well as money. Some of them, it is true, were rich men—Amadeo, for instance, and Pollaiuolo; but this is exceptional, in spite of large prices which had to be paid for important work. From its nature monumental sculpture could seldom be a fashionable or lucrative art, nor could it appeal to the intimate tastes of any but the most wealthy.

## 46 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

sculpture was sufficiently established to defy the local revolutions and disturbances which in one and influential patrons. At the same time it must not be supposed that the art was ever considered less honourable or distinguished than the sister art of painting. In the dialogues, common enough during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in which the respective merits of painting and sculpture were debated, the tournament usually ends in a drawn battle. The painters who were also versed in plastic art liked to make the fact known, and vice versa. The shrine at Or San Michele is signed by Orcagna "pictor"; while Lorenzo Vecchietta calls himself "sculptor" on the Pienza altar-piece and "pictor" on the statue decorating the Loggia de' Nobili at Siena: on the very bad Delfino tomb in San Salvadore at Venice, Giulio Mauro calls himself architect, painter, and sculptor. There are indeed many indications of co-operation between the two arts. During the fourteenth century painters frequently supplied designs for statues, while Donatello furnished the cartoon for the great stained-glass window in the Cathedral of Florence. In fact we find ourselves confronted by men of universal genius—Verrochio, Leonardo, Cellini, Michael Angelo, one might add many more—men who were proficient in all the manifestations of art, literary and pictorial. Many, too, were architects of pre-eminent skill, and in a dozen cases we find sculptors performing the sterile duties of the engineer, planning fortifications, escarpments, and engines of destruction. It also fell to their lot to supervise the ephemeral decorations which were employed on occasions of great public ceremony (see page 245). The province of the sculptor was in fact very extensive, and the varied branches of the vocation can be realised to some extent from the style and appellations given to sculptors in their contracts. *Maestro di muro, picchia pietra, seccatore, lastrajuolo*, and perhaps *incisor*, must have applied to those chiefly engaged in the stonework. *Magistro a lignamine* refers to wood-carving, *plasmatore* and *plastico* to the men who made stucco; Agostino di Duccio calls himself *Lapicida* on the façade of the Oratory of San Bernardino at Perugia, a work in which terra cotta plays the chief part. General phrases such as *scultore di marmi, scalpellino*, and fabricator figurarum are common. *Sarcofagaio* is reminiscent of an early specialisation; *aurifex* is very common (see page 86). "Fictor et excussor" is applied to Filarete; Pagno was an inspector, "sollicitator cæterum sculptorum." In an Orvieto contract of 1423 Donatello is called "intagliatorem figurarum, magistrum lapidum, atque intagliatorem figurarum in ligno et eximium magistrum omnium trajectorum."

part or another of Italy were of annual occurrence for the next two hundred years.

BAS-RELIEF.—It is during these two centuries that progress in plastic form was developed and matured—progress from bas-relief to free-standing (with an intermediate stage), from free-standing to the group, and thence to the final achievement of the equestrian statue. The evolution of form presents one of the most interesting problems in the history of Italian sculpture. That its primitive style was bas-relief cannot be doubted; and for many hundred years it represented practically the only grade of the art: at any rate since the days of Constantine free-standing sculpture had ceased to exist. Bas-relief is in its essence immobile. It must be seen from the front. It must be either complementary to some architectural design, such as door or architrave, or else applied to font, pulpit, altar frontal, or some similar object which precludes any other form of sculpture. It is for application to such uses that the early examples already reproduced were made. The progress of bas-relief followed or synchronised with the progress of the spectators' power of visual grasp and appreciation. The reliefs at Groppoli satisfied the requirements of the moment: inscriptions of the twelfth century show complete confidence and self-satisfaction in the products of the period. But more and more was demanded. Long after free-standing figures had become common, bas-reliefs continued to improve.

## 48 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

Having no prototype in nature it was permissible to employ conventions; and to portray a whole series of incidents, not only upon a single plaque, but almost within the same plane, was thought legitimate. Ghiberti followed the precedent of the sarcophagi in this massing of scenes; but his consummate skill enabled him to indicate atmosphere and distance, and thus to convey a keen sense of reality. But even so he went too far: he makes a tree cast its shadow on a cloud. In spite of lucid disposition of groups (his individual figures being perfect) there is absence of lucidity and logic in the grouped compositions. He secured pictorial effects but to the detriment of plastic beauty; he tried to paint in bronze, and though his success was little short of marvellous, he was outrivaled in bas-relief by Luca della Robbia and Donatello. They realised one essential element in bas-relief, namely the need for a dominant figure, a central theme; in some cases, such as the Crucifixion, this was inevitable, but it was long before the requirement became an axiom of composition. Moreover it was not always easy to carry it into effect. The very scale of the Parthenon frieze or the Trajan column precluded any culminating scene, while the classic desire for continuous and unbroken narrative equally forbade a series of groups, each invested with some concentrated action. This method of sculpture, *currente calamo*, ever flowing onwards without beginning or end, was continued on the sarcophagi,

and its traces will even be found in Ghiberti's gates ; although he had progressed far beyond the need of dividing incidents by means of pilasters,<sup>1</sup> trusting to more technical processes for discrimination, and making the contrast of high with low relief differentiate between time, place, and date. From sheer mastery of material he paid small heed to making one factor dominant. Ghiberti and his colleagues were moreover practical men : their sculpture had the merit of being visible. When *in situ*, the Parthenon frieze was invisible ; and in order to read the two hundred yards of anecdote which clothe Trajan's column, it is necessary to walk round and round the Forum, covering a distance of nearly two miles. Even then, granting that the topmost carvings were in perfect condition and picked out with colour, their scale is too slender and their carving much too faint to convey any precise meaning. The uniformity of this relief is also fatiguing to the eye, and among Italian artists this tendency to monotony frequently recurred. It is noticeable in Antonio Rossellino, here and there in the work of Mino da Fiesole,<sup>2</sup> while Benedetto da Rovezzano applied the requirements of sculpture *en ronde bosse* to

<sup>1</sup> This subdivision survived in the figured doors of bronze ; the explanation being that doors were normally made of wood, and that the small panels enclosed by framework most suitably maintained the analogy (see fig. 7). All figured bronze doors, from those of the eleventh century at Amalfi, down to those erected a few years ago at Florence, are modelled upon this convention.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. pulpit in Prato Cathedral.

## 50 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

reliefs, failing to discept between the requirements of the two styles.<sup>1</sup> So too in Venice competent men like Jacopo Sansovino did not always disengage the incident, and thus lost a telling element of dramatic emphasis.<sup>2</sup> It is only in the work of the greatest men that the concentrated relief could be combined harmoniously with a dominating motive, and this was especially difficult in a long panel. The archaic method was to rectify errors of judgment or proportion by adding figures laterally, but this sacrificed all balance and concentration. Donatello's bronzes at Padua are perhaps the most remarkable of Italian reliefs from the point of view of emphatic concentration.<sup>3</sup> Every figure, almost every gesture, bears its share in conveying the emphatic lesson of the miraculous incident. Luca della Robbia never had occasion to combine so large a number of figures, but he was a consummate master of bas-relief (fig. 54). His whole life was in fact devoted to it, two small

<sup>1</sup> Cf. reliefs in the Bargello, from the shrine of San Giovanni Gualberto.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the six bronze reliefs in the choir of San Marco illustrating the life of St. Mark; and compare the large reliefs in the Giustiniani Chapel of San Francesco della Vigna at Venice, made under the influence of Tullio Lombardi. They almost show Ghiberti's delicacy of touch, the marble being treated like embroidery. But although the scenes are grave and devotional, there is no light or shade, and monumental effect is lost in the uniformity of relief.

<sup>3</sup> Bronze reliefs of the miracles of Sant' Antonio of Padua in the Church of that name. The reliefs on the ambones of San Lorenzo at Florence are the work of Donatello's extreme old age: though intensely dramatic they cannot compare with the Paduan reliefs made several years before.

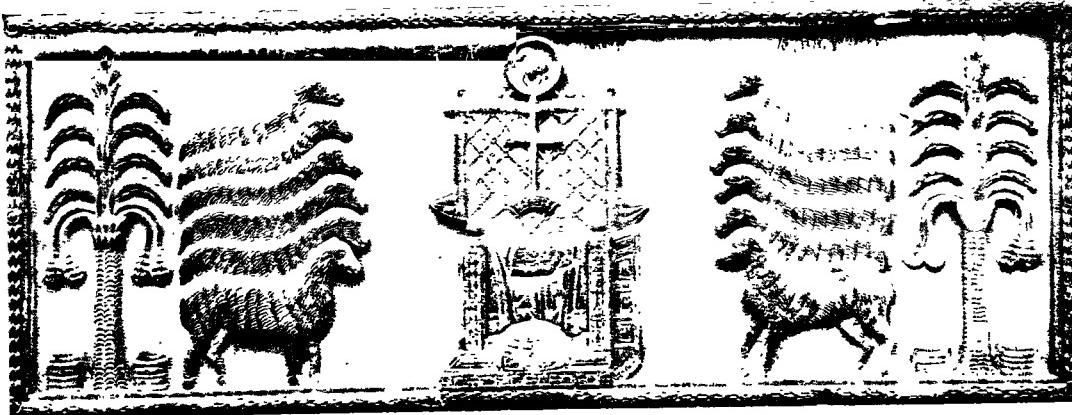


FIG. 15.

CHRIST AMONG THE APOSTLES, SAN MARCO, VENICE



FIG. 16. DOOR OF SANTA SABINA, ROME (fragment).

[To face p. 50.]



angels representing his total output of free-standing sculpture. Though Luca did not introduce bas-relief to Tuscan art, his pre-eminent skill and the diversity of his effects, undoubtedly preserved its popularity and postponed the full demand for free-standing figures. Bas-relief however remained, and always must remain, an indispensable branch of plastic art, and not even Michael Angelo was able to confine himself to free-standing or the group. Moreover in the sixteenth century the narrative qualities of bas-relief were much called into vogue for Papal tombs and monuments. Carpaccio at Venice, Massaccio at the Carmine, and Pinturichio at Siena, had all painted long chapters of history, but always in a didactic and proselytising spirit. In Rome the historical scene was frankly political. The tomb of Pius V. records the battle of Lepanto ; Sixtus V. displays his achievements in peace and war, laying stress on the latter. The occupation of Ferrara under Clement III. and the despatch of troops to Austria by Paul V. are represented in reliefs on the memorials to those pontiffs. All these incidents were of recent occurrence : the tombs are so to speak brought up to date, like Trajan's column or the Arch of Titus. But where politics were prominent Christian scenes could find no place ; and whether in the sculpture or in the vast paintings of the Sala Regia, one is overwhelmed by the dreariness and make-belief of these Papal politics as interpreted by the artist, who was

52 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE  
seldom able to grasp their meaning, or to invest them with abiding significance.

MILANESE RELIEFS.—It is to be observed that these Roman scenes were straightforward examples of bas-relief, well arranged and symmetrical, and showing no farfetched effort to simulate painting; neither was there any progress towards that intermediate stage between bas-relief and free-standing sculpture which for a good many years had become a commonplace in Northern Italy. Mantegazza and Amadeo were the local protagonists of the plastic revival in Piedmont and Lombardy; and it is a great mistake to think that the Visconti and Sforza were not generous patrons of the art. The towns were numerous and wealthy—Pavia in the fifteenth century had 150 churches—and the demand for tombs and shrines was so considerable that an extensive school of artists in bas-relief was kept busily engaged. It was moreover a school of marked individuality, though they did not impress their personality upon their surroundings, nor was there ever such unity and correspondence between various arts as was the case in Tuscany or Venice. Milan, for instance, was never quite Gothic, never quite Renaissance, never quite Baroque. As far as sculpture was concerned, the style was extraordinarily personal, and from 1450 to 1550 retained characteristics which are unrelated to work produced anywhere else in Italy. Northern influences, and particularly Flemish and Teutonic engravings, are re-

flected throughout ; there is a harshness of touch, and an absence of humour and playfulness, all the more unfortunate since their whole plastic art was conceived on a small scale. Little figures and many of them, dainty pilasters, fanciful decoration, and numerous scenes, comprise the invariable elements of the composition. The faces are wan, the figures unduly elongated. The drapery has analogies to Northern art, but is not exactly derived from that multiplicity of folds which makes something like an architectural base to Bavarian and Flemish figures ; the folds look as though they were gouged out of clay, and are often quite unrelated to the structure of the body. The treatment is rugged almost to the point of violence, and its one merit is the measure of *chiaroscuro* caused by the vivid play of light and shadow. Later artists such as Briosco and Bambaja softened down these asperities, but in doing so they lost the very qualities which gave character to the school. The output of vapid and sugary work was enormous. In the history of bas-relief Amadeo and his contemporaries played an important part ; nowhere else was high relief and undercutting so common. Gradually they arrived at the intermediate stage between bas-relief and free-standing, where the figures are often wholly detached, but none the less related to the background. These groups mark a stage in the long struggle to overcome the frontality which is inseparable from pure bas-relief. The primitive type consisted of a

sequence of silhouettes disposed along a flat background; but at this intermediate stage the background takes a living and integral part in the composition, with action and interaction between the two. It marks the reluctance of the sculptor to limit his work to one aspect, while the spectators' point of view becomes less fixed. Some of these grouped reliefs are rhythmical, and are composed to all intents and purposes of free-standing figures; especially noticeable are those of Como Cathedral by the two Rodari.

THE LUNETTE.—The lunette provided the setting for these semi-detached reliefs. It affords one of the most becoming frames in which to place sculpture. Being of necessity sheltered, well within the range of vision, and usually holding a central and prominent position by reason of its relation to the doorway or altar-piece, artists soon realised its great potentialities, and devoted their skill to its decoration. Early lunettes were left vacant,<sup>1</sup> or else relieved by the insertion of some meaningless scrap of carving, while it is probable that in many cases there was originally a window—the west window perhaps of the nave, which on reconstruction of the church was suppressed and placed higher up on the façade.<sup>2</sup> The segment of a circle formed by the lunette

<sup>1</sup> Most of them up to 1250 were in fact undecorated with sculpture, though mosaic was probably employed.

<sup>2</sup> They survive at San Michele and San Giovanni, Lucca; at the Collegio dei Notari, Perugia; and also at San Domenico, Imola: there are traces of these windows at Sant' Andrea, Pistoja, and at San Paolo, Pisa.

THE LUNAR ECLIPSE - 17-20  
To facs. p. 84.



FIG. 17.

DEPOSITION, NICCOLO PISANO, LUCCA.

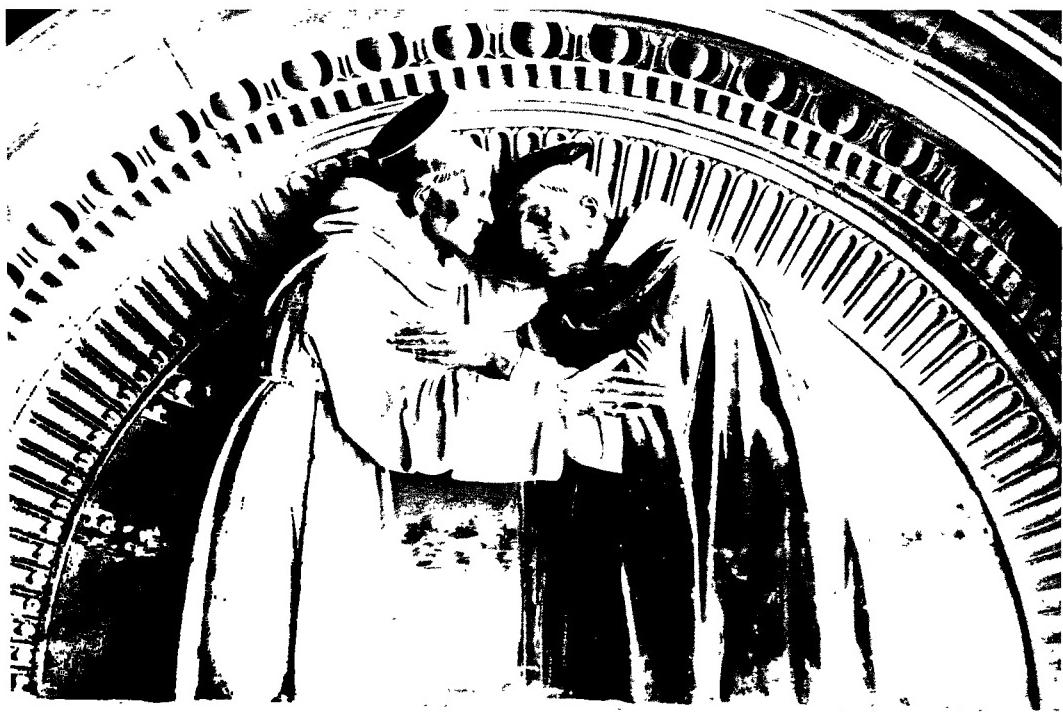


FIG. 18.

ST. DOMINIC AND ST. FRANCIS, FLORENCE.



FIG. 19.

THOMAS OF RAVENNA, VENICE.



FIG. 20.

ADMIRAL CAFFARO, VENICE.

To face p. 55.

required a special disposition of the figures ; and a centralised episode such as an Entombment or a Madonna and Child was imperative. The upper curve would make the field of the lunette impracticable for crowded or continuous scenes such as a procession or a battle, as there would be no *rationale* in the reduced or bending figures at either extremity. Even so thoughtful a man as Niccolo Pisano was unable to group his Deposition from the Cross (Lucca Cathedral) without arbitrarily subjecting the outer figures to the curve imposed by the hemicycle (fig. 17). An inward inclination of the figures corresponding to the structural lines is skilfully made use of by Luca della Robbia in his Ascension (Duomo Florence), a subject of which the composition involuntarily suggests a pyramidal design. The well-known lunette at Florence of St. Dominic meeting St. Francis, shows an interesting variation, the figures overlapping the cornice of the tympanum (fig. 18). Two other examples (figs. 19 and 20) are Venetian — Thomas of Ravenna surrounded by the apparatus of his great learning, and Admiral Capello kneeling before St. Helena. In neither case is the subject suitable for a semi-circle ; but nothing can surpass the tact and discretion with which Sansovino suggests the broad outlook of the philosopher surveying the world : Geography on his right hand, Astronomy on his left. He boldly decentralises the composition. In the other lunette a personal intimate note is struck ; the

## 56 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

two upright figures are drawn close together. Nothing again could be more devotional than the suppliant admiral, or more gracious than his patron saint.

THE NICHE.—Analogous to the lunette, and also marking the intermediate stage between bas-relief and free-standing, is the statue placed in a niche. Usually a single upright figure is obligatory owing to the perpendicular form of the recess; and throughout the fifteenth century many hundreds were placed upon façades of churches and public buildings, of which the structure had been completed from 1300 onwards. In early French architecture rows of statues were erected (particularly beside the portals), and the projecting canopy provided the substitute or semblance of the niche. Some such framework is necessary, especially when it is remembered that there is no space for a sculptured background, as in the case of lunettes, to connect the main subject with the fabric of the building. Where this harmony between architecture and sculpture is absent the effect is disturbing. They say there are two thousand statues on the exterior of the Cathedral of Milan: one might add two thousand more without making the church look better furnished, for there is something automatic in the way each window has its specified quota of statues and its regular series of blank spaces. Architecture and sculpture are at war; the former dominates the latter, but the sculpture none the less manages to distract one's

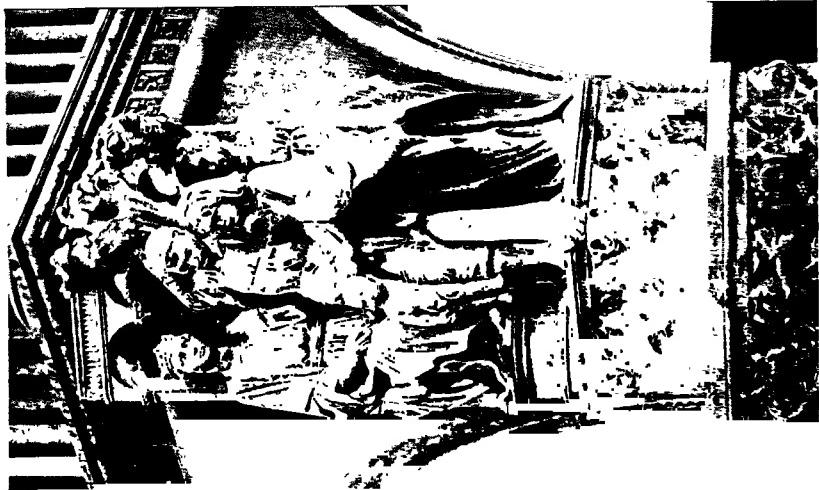
attention from the architectural lines. Moreover in many cases the base upon which the figure stands slopes downwards, and thus deprives the statue of all appearance of stability. The statue and the niche should be co-ordinated—where possible unified; and nowhere is the niche more happily suited to its contents than in Venice. The Loggetta of Sansovino—now perished with the Campanile—afforded the most dexterous examples to be found in Italy (fig. 86). Painters also made use of this motive with great freedom. The architectural scheme of the open gallery in which Botticelli lays the scene of the Calumny is entirely composed of statues in niches; other painters, such as Franciabigio, used the recess as the framework for single figures with telling effect (fig. 70).

**FREE-STANDING AND THE GROUP.**—Free-standing sculpture is a late development, and Byzantine art seldom reached this stage of plastic evolution. But soon after the revival in the twelfth century Italian art showed indications of free figures. Putting aside the statuette, the beginnings will be found in the great pulpits and shrines of the Pisan school, supported primarily by columns which shortly became caryatides, in the nature of free-standing figures (fig. 22). Thus the single pilaster-figure afforded the prototype of the free-standing statue, while the multiple pilaster-figure ultimately developed into the group. The caryatides or basal pillars below Balduccio's shrine at Milan

## 58 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

(fig. 14) are of course from their nature architectural supports, immovable; the real free-standing statue is independent, an isolated entity so to speak. Its background may be a landscape, masonry, or the open air. It has to be seen from varied standpoints; but whatever the aspect, it must always express the same action; it must present a sequence of views at once different and identical. Its contrast with the bas-relief lies in the requirement that the profiles and even the back view should be complementary to the front view. Still more absolute is this axiom in the case of the group. Moreover, for two or more figures to be combined in a plastic unit, it is necessary that the subject should be concentrated and brief. One cannot conceive such a theme as Christ among the Apostles or a Last Judgment treated as a plastic group; but where the subject is homogeneous, such as a Descent from the Cross, all the actors being occupied both physically and morally in the same manner, it would be possible to form a group. But the difficulties in such a case would be great; and they were only surmounted by such men as Guido Mazzoni and Begarelli by surrendering plastic unity—or, as they themselves would have argued, by creating unity on a colossal scale by means of a large number of detached figures, grouped into groups. The early groups were essentially modest in scope and small in dimension, and among them the fountain-head at Perugia (fig. 21) is noteable as a bronze casting,





1150 1000 10 50  
1150 1000 10 50



A SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE ON THE USE OF COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING



FIG. 21.  $\text{I}_{\text{C}}(\text{t})$  vs.  $t$  for  $\alpha = 0.1$ ,  $\beta = 0.05$ ,  $R_{\text{in}} = 100 \Omega$ ,  $R_{\text{out}} = 10 \Omega$ ,  $R_{\text{load}} = 10 \Omega$ .

and instructive from its composition.<sup>1</sup> The three girls back to back support four wolves, the municipal emblem. It may be observed that there is only one type for the figures of the girls on the lower tier, and one similarly for the animals above. Thus the figures are grouped in order to enhance the importance of the fountain by increasing the number of water-jets, and also presumably to give an identic view from each corner of the square. The repetitions could not be expected either to complicate or to enrich any particular motive. Giovanni Pisano fifty years later made a group, equally utilitarian, serving as a central pillar for his pulpit at Pisa (fig. 22). Though more ambitious than the Perugia fountain it is less successful, being a reversion to the idea of composite and allied caryatides. One would say that the four figures had been thought out separately, carved one at a time, and then placed symmetrically around the central figure, the allegorical personification of Pisa. The group marks an effort : Rosso's bronze fountain at Perugia is

<sup>1</sup> It was cast in 1277 by a certain Rosso of Perugia, and it is not improbable that he also furnished the design. This singular monument is unfortunately placed, for the three girls who stand *adossées* in the great basin are life-sized figures ; but they are now placed on its floor and stand in the water, whereas their feet should be raised at least to the level of the brim : fully one-third of the group is now invisible. The three figures have their upper arms in common, that is to say three in all ; and from the elbow downwards the arm bifurcates—so there are six forearms and six hands. There is something very Etruscan in this angular disposition of the limbs, which suggest the silhouette of an anchor.

## 60 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

wholly spontaneous. But the importance of Giovanni's group must not be under-rated, for it marks an epoch in the history of Italian marble: works of this scale did not become usual for several generations. The Abraham of Donatello, Verrochio's Christ and St. Thomas, and the four Martyrs by Nanni di Banco are all placed within niches; Donatello's Judith, a pile of figures, might well have been designed for a similar emplacement. The groups at the angles of the Doge's Palace are likewise structural in character and dependent upon architecture (fig. 23). Though fettered to this extent, they are masterly compositions, and show a phase of Northern influence acting upon Tuscan traditions which is all too rarely found.

GUIDO MAZZONI'S GROUPS.—Though none of these groups are free-standing, being either architectural in substance or placed within niches, they none the less display the true qualities of the group far more than in the work of the Northern artists to whom reference has been made. Guido Mazzoni and Begarelli in the sixteenth century, Giovanni Barberini of Como in the seventeenth century, together with a host of competent pupils and imitators, turned out masses of single figures which were skilfully placed together into groups. But the figures remain separable: they are detached, and in point of fact do not compose genuine groups at all, being in reality nothing more than a juxtaposition of figures. Groups, however, they

must be called for lack of a better term. Their scale is astonishing: one finds compositions of five-and-twenty life-sized figures, disposed with perfect fluency.<sup>1</sup> There is an excusable prejudice against this style of sculpture, because it soon led the artist into excess; but in its early stages there were unquestionable merits. One cannot help being impressed by Mazzoni's work. It is obviously sincere in sentiment and devotional in its lesson: his science was advanced, his observation of gesture and facial character was keen (fig. 38). Like the whole of this school his predilections were intensely dramatic, with the result that the vast majority of these groups illustrate scenes from the Passion. Terracotta or stucco was always employed. The raw material was to be had cheaply; it was easily worked, and it did not involve any costly apparatus or the employment of numerous helpers. Like the Della Robbias, these Lombard artists travelled about using the local clay, and leaving behind them huge fictile records which would have been absolutely impossible had marble been the medium. It was this facility of execution which brought the art into disrepute. The justification of these groups was their homely drama, and the profoundly didactic feelings aroused by a Pietà or Entombment, of which the figures are close to the spectator's eye—often indeed within his reach; for these groups

<sup>1</sup> The altar-piece in Sant' Agostino, Cremona, has no less than twenty-six figures: it is by Giovanni Barberini (1666).

## 62 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

sometimes stand unenclosed on the floor of the chapel, and one can actually walk between a St. John and a Magdalen. Emphasis was needful; the groups had to be well staged, and thus it was usual to place them within some deep and ill-lighted recess. Hence arose the desire to confer by means of paint, qualities which could only be partially rendered by the clay; and the weakness of polychromacy is nowhere more obvious than in these detached groups. Mazzoni's groups were probably painted originally, but not so those of Begarelli. In its desire for drama this school unconsciously fell into melodrama; they became theatrical, somehow almost stereoscopic; and the latest developments are sometimes painful and not infrequently ridiculous.<sup>1</sup> Isolated figures grouped together had none the less produced exquisite compositions: the Annunciation, the Visitation, and similar episodes where two or more personages are represented at the moment of meeting or departure, were fertile sources of

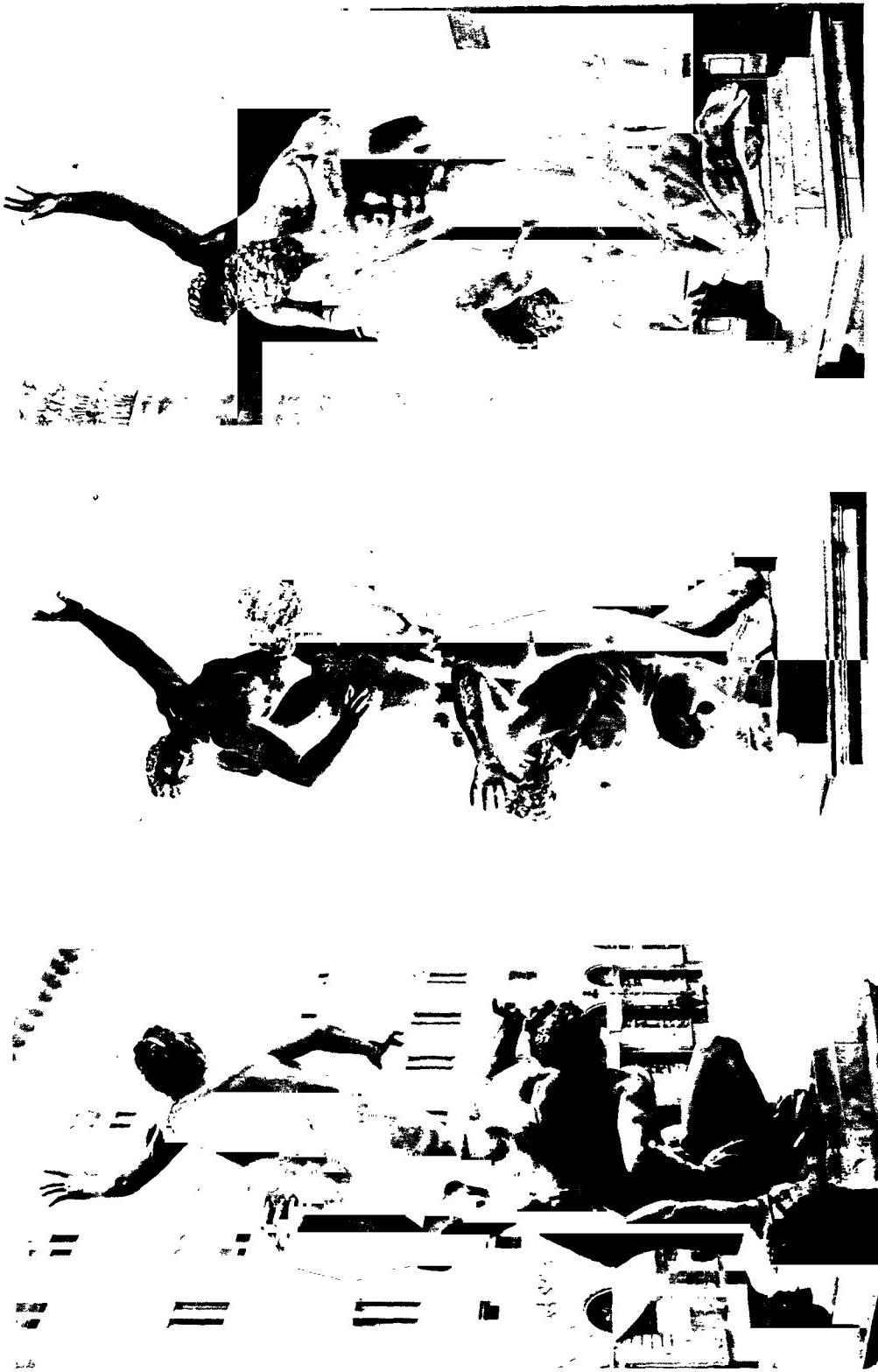
<sup>1</sup> It was the wire substructure of the stucco which encouraged the *plasmatore* to take liberties with human form and attitudes, enabling him to make striking peepshows without much difficulty; but he produced waxworks rather than sculpture—infinitely less attractive than those Bavarian *crêches* and costume pieces, of which so remarkable a collection is preserved at Munich. The scale of the Italian work was in itself somewhat pretentious and exaggerated. Nothing could be worse than the large Ascension in Como Cathedral by Agostino Silva da Morbio 1666-9. The Christ on the Cross in Santa Maria di Campagna at Piacenza, and the transept of San Vitale at Parma which positively swims in stucco, afford other examples of the hopeless decadence into which clever artists fell, largely by reason of the technical ease with which they could fashion a malleable material.



(To face p. 63)

RAPPL OF (III) SAVIAN WOMEN GIVING BIRTH IN FLORENCE.

1968, 246.



plastic motive. Surprise, hesitation, and regret, conveyed by the inflection of the body or the gesture of the hands, are among the simple but touching emotions which this type of group could fittingly portray (fig. 76).

HIGH RENAISSANCE GROUPS.—Far more complicated were the emotions which we find in the groups of the High Renaissance, and tenfold were the technical difficulties to be overcome. The artists were not content with duality of figures: their groups required more vigour and concentration. The complexity of such an event as the Rape of the Sabine Women, or Perseus and Andromeda, could never be rendered unless the group was made really compact. So also the full pathos of a Pietà or of a Lamentation over the dead Christ, seemed to demand a composition wrought out of a single block of marble, or cast in one jet of bronze. The great men of the sixteenth century shrank before no difficulties of their craft: their knowledge of statics was amazing, and their sense of physical balance was unique. Giovanni Bologna's Rape of the Sabines is perhaps the most brilliant example of technical skill. Being made of marble, he had to apportion every projection of his heavy material to the exigencies of weight and balance; yet the group has all the easy freedom of some bronze statuette fastened to a solid plinth. The composition itself—looking at it from the point of view of the group, and ignoring certain errors of taste which in this

## 64 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

connection are irrelevant—the composition itself is so full of life that from every standpoint different versions appear. The eye cannot embrace the whole scheme at once—which would be a fault in a bas-relief, but which in a free group is commendable: because although every part and particle should be correlated, there can be neither scope nor need for simultaneous analysis (figs. 24-26). Cellini's Perseus is in its way almost as versatile (fig. 27). There are only two figures, but the problem of placing the upright Perseus above the prostrate Medusa—a perpendicular figure towering over one which is horizontal—presented difficulties of an exceptional kind. Cellini grouped these incongruous elements with dexterity, combining them by drawing together the limbs of the Medusa (thus reducing the basal expansion), while the downward inclination of the head of Perseus binds the two figures into a single unit.

MICHAEL ANGELO AND THE GROUP.—With Michael Angelo the group was the natural medium. He thought in groups, just as Niccolo Pisano thought in bas-relief. Michael Angelo, and to a large extent Bernini, intuitively realised the visual and tactile values of that side of every figure which was for the moment remote from the spectator, and they detected the latent group from the beginning. To Michael Angelo the *abbozzo* lay hidden within the block of marble, and only awaited exposure. Most of his groups which



FIG. 27. PERSEUS, BY CELINI, FLORENCE.



FIG. 28. APOLLO AND DAPHNE, BY BERNINI, ROME.

To face p. 74



have come down to us are still embryonic—scarcely emerged from the outer shell. There was no laborious construction or building up of the component parts. On the contrary he approached the problem from the other extreme, and literally brought his group into being by cutting away the outer crust of the marble, down to the final point at which the surface of the statue itself was revealed. Internal as well as documentary evidence goes far to show that he could actually work free-hand, relying upon a few measurements, and still more upon his unerring science and intuition. Among his preparatory designs for the painting in the Sistine Chapel are groups of rare complexity, sometimes involving half a dozen figures, interlaced in orderly confusion, and betraying none of the efforts normally associated with such compositions. The faculty of conceiving the group with the ease with which other men could imagine a free figure or a bas-relief, undoubtedly led him astray. The Rondanini Pietà, a work of supreme drama, the Genius of Victory, and the Descent from the Cross at Florence (which must rank among the masterpieces of plastic art) all show traces of miscalculation. In the former group, the head of Christ is rough-hewn; but during the initial process so much of the marble was cut away that no place is left for further carving, except at the cost of reducing the features to childlike proportions. It was impossible to finish this statue:

## 66 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

to have done so would have changed its whole personality, and indeed its very theme. But the pathos of the Virgin, and the stupendous weariness of the dead limbs of the Christ, remain unaffected by the error of measurement and the miscalculation of bulk. This Pietà, one of the last works of the master, is also one of the most characteristic productions of his genius. It is dramatic, it is profound, and it is incomplete. Here as elsewhere Michael Angelo triumphs over his own shortcomings; and furthermore throughout his long career he was haunted by the fickleness of patrons and by the curse of politics. The greatest plastic achievement of his century, the Medici tombs, remains like his groups, only half realised ; and the greatest pictorial marvel of his time, the vault of the Sistine Chapel, occupies what is perhaps the worst imaginable site for a monumental painting. The difficulties with which he had to contend were well-nigh insuperable: for most of them others were responsible, for some of them he himself. Of the technical difficulties one of the greatest was, that in his conception of the group, he required a continuity and sequence in the silhouette, and insisted that the unity of the composition should be embraced by one dominating line. In this he is the antithesis of Bernini. Putting aside for the moment ethical questions, Bernini was the only successor of Michael Angelo who could improvise the group. Much of his work, such as the tombs of the



FIG. 29

FIG. 29

JUDITH, DONATELLO, FLORENCE.

To face p. 66.



Popes, is in a sense analogous to the groups of Begarelli, being free figures, although in these cases unified by vast architectural accessories. But Bernini also made groups which technically can only be compared with those of Gian Bologna and Michael Angelo. The taste of the seventeenth century demanded something more agitated than the calm and majestic drama of the Cinquecento; the sentiment had to be full-blooded, movement was obligatory, drapery had to flutter in the imaginary breeze. Thus Bernini's groups express movement, while those of Michael Angelo, though full of action, are in repose. Aeneas staggering beneath the burden of the precious and somewhat heavy Anchises, and Bernini's other famous group at Rome, Apollo and Daphne (fig. 28), represent plastic schemes in which unity of line and silhouette were out of the question; the cross motive is of necessity introduced by the vigorous movement. Without a perfect mastery of statics and counterbalance, such groups would be impossible.

THE EQUESTRIAN STATUE.—These qualities were also necessary for the equestrian group—for the "Cavollo"—the great monument of regal pomp and victorious Condottieri. Italy is *par excellence* the home of the equestrian statue; and curiously enough the city of Venice where no horse was ever seen, is the capital in which, by virtue of her military successes, more equestrian figures will be found than anywhere else. There

is a singular absence of these figures in Rome. Military valour was recorded in bas-relief on the tombs of the Popes, but throughout Central and Northern Italy these equestrian statues are numerous. The early examples are in marble, and the horse is standing still<sup>1</sup>: the great weight of the material led artists to strengthen the structure by placing pillars beneath the horse, and in some cases by adding lateral figures. The horse of Barnabo Visconti in the Castello at Milan is planted on his four legs, and has the additional support of one pillar and two girls attending the prince (fig. 30). Can Signorio at Verona shows progress to the extent of dispensing with these supports on either side, but there are still five legs so to speak. In the case of Can Grande the support is discreetly hidden. This splendid figure (see frontispiece) surmounts a lofty monument and often escapes attention. It is sadly mutilated, and has been patched up by some journeyman; moreover the heavily caparisoned horse and the rich accoutrements of his rider have perished from long exposure. But the whole thing is superb, and in its essence, stripped of all accessories, this monument must always be a *capo d'opera*. No more eloquent scene from the Romances of Chivalry was ever imagined in the whole course of Italian art. Firmly seated in the saddle, Can Grande looks outward, laughing—a self-confident and command-

<sup>1</sup> The motive had long found favour in bas-reliefs of St. George and St. Martin.



FIG. 30.

BARNABÒ VISCONTI, MILAN

To face p. 65



ing figure, the very embodiment of force and *bravura*. The great equestrian monument next in date is the Gattamelata of Donatello, somewhat ill-placed on the broad piazza of Padua (fig. 31). This group is in bronze, a material with physical properties of toughness and cohesion, which allowed greater liberty of equilibrium than was inherent in marble. It is infinitely more scientific than Can Grande, horse and rider being better unified, and the scale being more grandiose. Donatello set himself the task of making the first bronze equestrian statue on a colossal scale, executed in Italy since the Roman Empire. He had to reconstruct the anatomy of the horse, and to perform a considerable technical feat in the casting. His success is admitted. A further stage of progress is attained by Verrochio in the Colleone at Venice (fig. 32). The horse of Gattamelata, though represented as ambling along, actually stands on all four legs. The movement of the Colleone is still more natural, for the horse, like that of Marcus Aurelius and the Quadriga at Venice, has one leg raised from the ground. Thus we have a steady progression marked by an ever-diminishing number of supports: Can Signorio required seven, Colleone three; and even then the sculptors, profiting from their growing familiarity with the dynamic qualities of bronze, would not rest content. Mocchi made the two equestrian statues at Piacenza, Ranuccio and Alessandro Farnese (fig. 34). From the ground level the spirited

## 70 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

horses appear to have only two feet raised in motion, so imperceptible is the little bolt of metal which binds the third to the pedestal. Though much inferior to the bronze groups already mentioned, they are the life of the city: the central square where they stand, takes its name from them—Piazza de' Cavalli. They give infinite pleasure, although their affectation is undisguised. We see that the horses are *frisés*, and we guess that the riders are perfumed: there is ostentation and unreality, a mixture of the circus and the pursuivant at arms. But so noble and dignified is the entity of the equestrian group that no artist, however decadent or insincere, ever made a monument wholly devoid of merit. Even Louis XIV. at St. Petersburg, and the astonishing Markgraf at Bayreuth, compel our respect, if not our admiration. In other fields Mocchi produced detestable work (fig. 75). His contemporary Tacca, a pupil of Gian Bologna, was more versed in equestrian statues than any other sculptor of the seventeenth century, and his greatest achievement is the huge figure of Philip IV. at Madrid (fig. 33). The natural movement of the horse had become *banal*, so with a skill which is really unsurpassed he makes the steed rear high upwards. Two tons of bronze are thus suspended in mid air. Their only support is derived from the hind-legs, aided by the deft contrivance of the horse's long tail, which naturally enough falls to the ground, but which secretly provides the further link between the statue and

LUSITANIAN STATUES, FIGS. 31-34.  
To face p. 72.

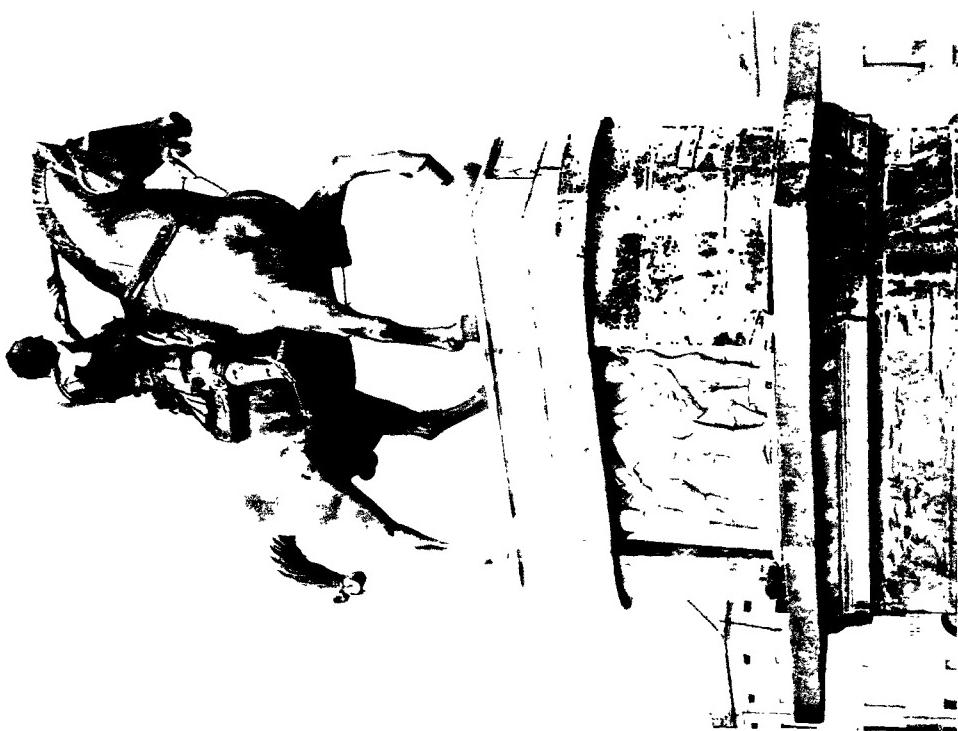
FIG. 31. — CANTAMILLAN, DONATELLO, PAOLO.

FIG. 32.

CANTAMILLAN, DONATELLO, PAOLO.

FIG. 31.

COLLEZIONE MIRROBIO, VIENNA





Françisco de Zurbarán, Moctezuma, Francia.

Fig. 34.

Philippe Lacca, Madrid

Fig. 35.



To face p. 72.

the pedestal. Some such tie was indispensable : even so, notwithstanding Tacca's knowledge of metallic resistances, based upon chemical and mechanical research, the experiment was perilous in the extreme. Italy was trembling on the verge of the application of steel girders to architecture ! In the history of equestrian statues we miss the work of two great men. The attempt of Leonardo da Vinci failed ; at any rate the figure of Francesco Sforza never got beyond the plaster stage. Innumerable drawings exist, sketches which are so vigorous that Leonardo might almost be claimed as having revived the standard of equine courage and vivacity. On the otherhand Michael Angelo was not only averse from working in bronze, the essential material for a High Renaissance equestrian group, but the horse scarcely seems to have existed in his mind. There are two or three of his drawings at Lille, which seem to be copies of antique bas-reliefs. But there is no horse in the early battle relief at Florence, nor was there one in the lost cartoon of the Soldiers taken by surprise. No other painter of his date would have failed to find some plausible excuse for the prominent introduction of horses into a work so gigantic as the paintings of the Sistine Chapel. We can be certain that an equestrian monument by Michael Angelo would have possessed at least one outstanding quality. The grouping would have been perfect, and above all the rider would have dominated his horse : Can Grande does so, but Colleone, though he doubtless

## 72 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

impresses his personality over the little *campo* where the monument presides, seems unconscious of the horse beneath him. Again Gattamelata looks small on his charger, although he does really ride the animal; and one may assume from Leonardo's drawings that the horse would have been the chief factor in the Sforza monument. Michael Angelo would have made the horse subsidiary and the rider supreme. Michael Angelo was the master of form, and the chosen form was that of humanity. He never noticed a horse; he scarcely painted a tree, bird, or flower. Landscape is avoided unless imposed by the theme.

MICHAEL ANGELO AS MASTER OF FORM.—The human form was the ideal ever before his mind—the universal form, as he called it—some fundamental type of humanity unmarked by any particularism, nationality, or localisation. We see this in every work from those of his boyhood to the Sistine roof, where the central space is duly reserved for the Creation of man. We see the same massive preoccupation in the works of his maturity and later years. Even the portraits of the Grand Dukes are made generic—stripped of everything that was Medicean in costume, features, or address. This elimination of personal and individual characteristics is specially noteworthy in his sculpture. There was truth in Migliarini's epigram, that the legend of man being born of stones was less applicable to Deucalion than to Buonarotti. Allusion has already been

made to the ease with which he handled stone. It is obvious from the surfaces, and we scarcely require confirmation from the accounts of Michael Angelo at work, sending the chips of marble flying all over the studio.<sup>1</sup> His unfinished statues—and they form the majority of his surviving works<sup>2</sup>—were left rough-hewn from two causes: a few from the fact that the form as he conceived it emerged from the block inconsistent with further development; in other cases, having once exposed the main lines with a truth and eloquence which are beyond praise, he grew tired of a task in which there was no further scope for initial creation. It was not that he was afraid of finishing his work: *on ne gâte pas en finissant, lorsqu'on est grand artiste*<sup>3</sup>: indeed it must have needed some boldness on his part to take over the block of marble, on which Agostino di Duccio had unsuccessfully experimented, and from which Michael Angelo drew the David. In any case these *abbozzi* are of telling interest as casting light on his stone-cutting technique.

<sup>1</sup> See Blaise de la Vigenère, in "Les images de Philostrate," Paris, 1629, page 853.

<sup>2</sup> In London the Tondo Madonna; at the Louvre two slaves; in Florence the Martyrdom of St. Andrew, the Battle relief, the Tondo Madonna, four figures in the Grotte Buontalente: St. Matthew at the Accademia, the Apollino, the Brutus, the Genius of Victory, much of the Medici tombs, and the Descent from the Cross. At Rome, portions of two figures in San Pietro in Vincoli, the Rondanini Pietà; at St. Petersburg, the Stooping Boy. Several of his pictures are also unfinished.

<sup>3</sup> "Journal d'Eugène Delacroix," 1859, vol. iii.

FINISH AND EMPLACEMENT.—The unfinished statue has always a charm of its own : its merits are potential, and there is a pleasant ambiguity which gives the spectator a latitude of interpretation. Thus the Faith by Matteo Civitale, the St. Sebastian of Benedetto da Majano (fig. 67), and the Cenacolo of Tullio Lombardi are more interesting in their rough state than they would have been completed, which also applies in a lesser extent to the Martelli David by Donatello.<sup>1</sup> Then again, the early stage of the statue sometimes conveys the impression of sternness and decision, often absent from the finished work of their authors.<sup>2</sup> “Finish” after all is a relative term. To a short-sighted man Michael Angelo’s bust of Brutus is “finished” when examined at a distance of ten or twelve feet ; and even the massive rough-hewn features of the Giorno are virtually complete : morally at any rate, for no amount of carving could add much to that brooding and melancholy countenance. There is a well-known passage where Davanzati describes Donatello’s Zuccone. The figure is placed high on the Campanile at Florence ; hence the eyes had to be

<sup>1</sup> These four statues are respectively in the Bargello, the Misericordia Florence, Santa Maria de’ Miracoli Venice, and the Palazzo Martelli Florence.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. two marble reliefs by Luca della Robbia in the Bargello : the Crucifixion of St. Peter and his Delivery from Prison. A remarkable case in point is the marble statuette in the museum of Orvieto, the Coronation of the Virgin : the work is Siennese of 1350 or thereabouts, and shows a strength and determination which are uncommon in the school of that period, owing to the dainty finish which was usual.

"dug out with a shovel," otherwise they would appear to be blind from the piazza below. Distance consumes diligence, he says—*la lontananza mangia la diligenza*—and nobody had studied the optical problems of plastic art more closely than Donatello. It was on this very point that Michael Angelo made a strange and almost incomprehensible criticism about Donatello's work. The faithful Condivi, who probably wrote under his master's supervision, says that, much as Michael Angelo admired Donatello, he had one source of complaint against him, namely his lack of patience in polishing statues, which reduced their value when examined at close quarters.<sup>1</sup> For such a view to have emanated from Michael Angelo of all people, even taking the San Lorenzo pulpits into account, is surprising. But finish and polishing were *de règle*: then as now nothing was more popular than what is called admirable detail. In the contract for the Piccolomini altar at Siena in 1501, a work in which Michael Angelo took a share, it is stipulated that the statues were to be better finished than those "nowadays customary in Rome." There is something almost comic in the early panegyric of certain frescoes in the Castello at Pavia, which were so highly varnished that one could see oneself reflected on the surface of the paint.<sup>2</sup> Unfinished sculpture is on the whole rare, since the block could always be used

<sup>1</sup> "Vita di Michel Angelo," Rome 1553, page 14.

<sup>2</sup> Anonimo Morelliano.

for other purposes ; but architecture was never considered finished, if we judge from the habit of leaving open putlog holes for scaffolding.

RELATION TO ARCHITECTURE.—Sculpture was deprived of many opportunities by the frequency with which church façades were left undecorated : at the end of the sixteenth century a dozen of the largest churches in Florence were without façades. None the less, monumental sculpture owed to architecture a debt which could never be repaid. Christian architecture was essentially big ; it ministered without distinction to the accepted religion of the masses of the people, and from the thirteenth century onwards, the Church was far larger than the Temple of ancient Greece or Rome. The early porch with its projecting eaves, and the relatively deep windows of the Romanesque building, gave the first stimulus to external sculpture, while the scope for internal sculpture was still greater and more varied. It is, however, in external work that the influence of architecture on sculpture, in its effect upon the shape and design of statuary, is most marked. Florence, at a certain stage in her history, having completed the fabric of her greatest buildings during the fourteenth century, turned, after a pause, to sculptors for their outward adornment. But the sculptors' intervention came somewhat late in the day, and throughout Italy it often happened that the summons never arrived, or that the sculptor was replaced by the architect.

In Venice the Church of San Marco bears an altogether unusual relation to plastic art. The amount of sculpture is enormous, but consisting very largely of low reliefs imported from the East, monumental figures are but little employed; while a passion for mosaics which covered the tympana and columns, as well as the domes, left little room for paintings and none for stucco.<sup>1</sup> Another characteristic of Venetian architecture reacted upon sculpture, namely the absence of buttresses and external caryatides. Their absence along the water fronts, where they would have been agreeable to the eye, and would also have relieved the façades from a certain flatness which blazes in the sunshine, is no doubt caused by the difficulties of making projecting foundations without checking the flow of water, and unduly narrowing the breadth of the canals. The cornice is likewise only developed on the palaces facing the greater canals, and even there somewhat grudgingly: the magnificent cornices of the Palazzo Strozzi at Florence, or those of the Palazzo Farnese at Rome, would have met across the narrow *calli* of Venice and made them quite dark. Venetian artists found compensation in fine balconies, in the employment of handsome pilasters, and in deep cool *loggie*; but this did not

<sup>1</sup> In point of fact there are only two paintings in the whole church: one painted by St. Luke and the other of miraculous origin. Compare this dearth with the Upper Church at Assisi or with the Arena Chapel at Padua, where the whole building is decorated with the brush.

help the sculptor, except in his capacity of *taglia-pietra*. Thus the carved caryatides of Venice will be found in the broad open courts ; on the Doge's palace for instance, or on the old Library ; but the sculptor introduced them as a special feature of the structural basis of the tomb.<sup>1</sup> Often, however, the sculptor gained the upper

<sup>1</sup> CARYATIDES.—The form of the caryatid, a buttress or column treated as a human figure and replacing some distinctive architectural support, is worth study. A decorous attitude is imperative, but the motive of the raised arms which help to bear the burden resting upon the head or shoulders, gave an opening for variety of posture. The early substitution of caryatides for pillars (a recognised practice in classical antiquity) can be observed in the work of Giovanni Pisano and Tino da Camaino. On the whole pulpits looked best when supported on plain columns. But before the caryatid gained its freedom it was often *appliqué* to a pilaster, as on the shrine of St. Peter Martyr at Milan (fig. 14) ; and up to a late period the Milanese school hesitated between the free and applied caryatid in their numerous shrines and cenotaphs. Amadeo combines the two forms on the tomb of Colleone at Bergamo, and the system is still more highly developed in the monument of Vitaliano Borromeo at Isola bella. On the other hand the monument of Camillo Borromeo, the shrine of St. Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, at Pavia, and the Brivio tomb in Milan by Cazzaniga, are raised high from the ground by means of thin pillars, too slender for the weight they carry. Like other plastic forms, caryatides reflect the ethics of the moment. With the early artists they are devotional figures, generally some named or recognisable saint. Then they become less personal and typify the virtues, sciences, or arts. The tomb of Brancacci at Naples by Donatello, and Michelozzo's tomb of Aragazzi in Montepulciano, are cases in point, though the figures are anonymous. With the approach of the High Renaissance these basal supports, particularly in memorial statues and tombs, became slaves (see page 303), and :warriors armed *cap-à pie*, a bodyguard of the figures above. This motive was specially popular in Venice and Naples ; it is not found in Rome, although in the tombs from 1250 to 1400 the actual sarcophagus is frequently enclosed by pillars, the function of which was to uphold the projecting hood or baldacchino. Admirable results flowed from the employment of caryatides, and it is to be regretted that the style never acclimatised

hand, monopolising broad surfaces of wall which should have been left to the less decorative play of the architect. Tuscan sculptors treated architecture with due respect ; but in the North there are two conspicuous instances where façades are almost ruined by illogical and excessive accumulation of carving.

THE CERTOSA DI PAVIA.—The front of the Capella Colleone at Bergamo, and the main façade of the Certosa near Pavia, are smothered by a mass of small and often insignificant carvings. Though there is nothing very remarkable about the architectural scheme of the Certosa, which consists of four great horizontal bands of windows, it is not at all bad structurally ; but on entering the forecourt, a quiet grass-grown atrium, one's first instinctive movement is to go near in order to see the church properly—to see the detail, and it is all detail. The sculpture has invaded the architecture ; but it is not monumental, and provides no substitute. The colour is harmonious,

itself in Rome. Applied to architecture the carved caryatides so closely perform structural obligations, that they lose the personal note and individuality to be found when placed below the tomb. Some of them, however, are fine : special reference may be made to Vittoria's great figures at the Libreria Vecchia Venice, and to the row of giants placed along the narrow street-front of the Medici bank (known as the Casa di Leone Leoni) at Milan. In the Cathedral of the latter city is a specimen of misapplied caryatides. Below each of the two great ambones are four bronze figures. Nominally they support the ambones, acting, that is to say, as caryatides, but they are bogus, and though unquestionably fine and admirably wrought, are quite meaningless, for they are actually hanging by metal bolts from the pulpit which they ostensibly uphold.

## 80 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

the detail exquisite. The thought is loving and fanciful, and the actual decorative carving abounds in grace ; but the *tout ensemble* is a jewel, not a temple. Windows are crowded out, or rather choked up and blinded by the sculpture, a special feature of which is the constant employment of the tondo.<sup>1</sup> Charming reliefs of great delicacy

<sup>1</sup> THE TONDO.—The tondo, or circular medallion, is so to speak a double lunette, though its employment as a plastic form of decoration is arbitrary, and never imposed on sculpture by architecture or ecclesiastical requirements. In buildings its use as a rose-window is of course common, though less so in Italy than north of the Alps. Certain towns seem specially to have favoured them, such as Perugia, Assisi, and Spoleto ; but the Wheel of Fortune, so fertile a motive in Burgundian and Flemish art, is extremely rare in Italy. Michael Angelo designed one (the drawing is in the Uffizzi), and they occur at Verona by Briolotto, and on the Cathedral of Trent ; but sculpture is only applied to them in a very minor degree. The ordinary tondo, such as one sees it on the façade of the Certosa, is generally small—an emperor's head or a disc of coloured marble. In the initial stage the tondo is more costly than a rectangular plaque, requiring more preparation, as well as a specially curved setting, to show it to advantage when completed. The circular form is, however, decorative in itself, hence its frequent employment. The influence of the shape on the design presented difficulties. It is not easy to dispose the plastic composition of a lunette ; even greater skill is required to make a composition which naturally and without restraint occupies the space within a circle. The analogy of medals, gems, and coins, did not carry the sculptor far, unless indeed the somewhat wearisome iteration of single heads—from the heroes of antiquity down to personages like Attila and Belisarius—be taken to indicate that the tondi were deliberately copied from old coins. And to some extent one assumes that the portrait medallions should be of this character : it is with a sense of surprise that one recognises in the medallions on the façade of Santa Catarina at Genoa the portraits of Franciscan friars. The inherent difficulties imposed by the design never prevented the Milanese sculptors from using tondi as a normal shape for their bas-reliefs ; but the composition, unless it be a single figure or some centralised group, seldom corresponds with the circle. It is rare to find a logical relation between the two, or any obvious

are placed sixty feet high, and can barely be detected with opera glasses ; work of precisely the same calibre is found within a few inches of the ground. Organically it is wrong to put such refinements low down, where sturdy masonry would have been more in keeping ; and it is moreover unwise, since the worshippers would infallibly wear away the sculpture in a couple of generations. Here, however, such considerations would not apply, as there was no town for miles, and the congregation was limited to a few score of Cistercian monks. None the less one carries away the impression that much good work has been hopelessly misplaced and wasted. The Colleone Chapel is less open to criticism in this respect, though even there, scarcely five per cent. of the façade is left without some form of embellishment, whether plastic or geometrical.

reason why the incident narrated should be governed by a round frame. A good example is Amadeo's Adoration of the Child (1482), now removed to the Milan Castello from San Lorenzo Cremona ; and small scenes both inside and outside the Certosa are often set out with success. Donatello's circular Madonna at Siena Cathedral (fig. 82), and the two Madonnas by Michael Angelo—all works of exceptional merit—are capriciously shaped ; rectangular panels would have contained them with equal distinction. In Tuscany *tondi* were never popular, though both sculptors and painters liked them for a time, notably during the latter half of the fifteenth century. Perhaps the most perfect *tondo* in Italian art is a picture, Botticelli's Adoration of the Magi in the National Gallery. It is a series of concentric rings ; the composition is in itself circular, and necessitates a genuine *tondo* for its display. As a plastic form the *tondo* is primarily a Northern product. Excluding oval reliefs, there are no less than 450 of them on the façade of Certosa ; there are scarcely a dozen on the cathedral façades of Siena, Pisa, or Orvieto.

DECORATED SURFACES.—Architects, in fact, liked decorated surfaces, sometimes calling in the help of stucco, frescoes, or armorial bearings, and sometimes cutting the masonry into bosses or facets, as at the so-called Palazzo dei Diamanti at Ferrara ; but more often letting the stonemason rusticate the lower part of the walls. The science of perspective became an art, deriving purely pictorial effects from mathematical designs. From the earliest workers in intarsia down to the Carcere of Piranesi, this practice continued in demand, and created a regular profession. Their technical dexterity was unrivalled, giving endless scope to the invention of infinite distances and *nuances*, suggested by vanishing points of perspective. They marked a fresh era and a precise stage in the progress of decoration.<sup>1</sup> They ousted the sculptor to some small extent, and in some cases, *e.g.* the façade of the Ospedale Civile at Venice, a whole wall is tricked out in perspective, an optical delusion and snare. Stone was also carved for purposes scarcely consistent with its nobility, such as the maps on the front of Santa Maria Zobenigo Venice, and for the Malatesta genealogy on the façade of Cremona Cathedral. With all these competing ideas of decoration, it follows that the Italian wall is decorated with immense variety of

<sup>1</sup> Incidentally they replaced the sundial, so much more popular in countries where its value was minimised by the climate. One finds astronomical designs let into the pavements of churches ; a problem of trigonometry is worked out on the façade of Santa Maria Novella at Florence.

form, colour, and material, and at times, it must be confessed, with vexatious extravagance. In small buildings,<sup>1</sup> an intimacy, and even a measure of overcharging, to some extent justified itself; the spirit of the boudoir permits a certain *abandon*. But the application of plastic art pure and simple, as a structural adjunct to secular buildings, was on the whole uncommon, and seldom attended by the success it obtained on churches. Putting aside such a *potpourri* of ancient reliefs as one finds incrusted into the walls of Rienzi's house at Rome—a form of decoration dictated by sheer patriotism—and apart from similar confections to be found on palace fronts at Montepulciano, Cortona, and other Umbrian towns, it is to be remarked that the municipalities seldom gave a comprehensive

<sup>1</sup> The undoubted charm of the small Italian building springs from the rare contrast it offers with the huge erections found in its vicinity. One form is the structure preserved within some larger church, a reliquary so to speak, like the Tempietto inside Lucca Cathedral, the Santa Casa of Loreto, and the Porziuncola below the vast cupola of Santa Maria degli Angeli at Assisi. Occasionally one finds diminutive churches comparable in scale with country parish churches at home, like Santa Maria della Rosa at Lucca, Santa Spina of Pisa, or San Giorgio degli Schiavoni at Venice; together with numerous private chapels and oratories, of which the most notable are in the Vatican, the Doge's Palace, and the Palazzo Riccardi. The really small buildings of early times have vanished under restoration and the accretion of later days; only at Ravenna, where the population has been stationary since the year 600, will the original scale of Italian buildings be measured. Of secular buildings, few are small. The Cambio at Perugia, and the miniature suite of apartments contrived for Isabella d'Este at Mantua (including rooms suited to the stature of her favourite dwarfs), are exceptionally interesting; and until looted by Napoleon, the *appartamento Este* was a marvel of well-considered decoration.

## 84 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

order to sculptors for the decoration of public buildings. Town-halls, or the *loggie* and arcades facing the big squares, are monuments of stately architecture, but one seldom finds an equivalent display of sculpture ; and where non-ecclesiastical buildings are effectively furnished with sculpture, it was generally through the intervention of guilds, corporations, or charities. One of the most successful instances of sculpture applied to a secular building is the Ceppo Hospital at Pistoja. It is customary to disparage these long reliefs of the seven works of mercy. They are by Giovanni della Robbia and his *entourage*, and naturally look somewhat crude when compared with the well-bred distinction of Andrea. But this façade is a real achievement. It is bright, perhaps the brightest domestic frontage in Italy. The colours are brilliant, but they are all justified and essential (red is absent) ; moreover the portraiture is very thoughtful. It is a lay affair. The saint, such as James of Compostella, only appears in order to present the tramps and pilgrims ; the priest is absent except where summoned by his vocation. There is a touching simplicity throughout these scenes of hunger, sickness, and death, which must have given the public some foretaste of the homely offices of charity dispensed within the hospital. Technically, also, the application of these reliefs to the walls of the building is happy. In these scenes Giovanni della Robbia is more than usually plastic in his ideas. Most

of the works of this branch of the school consist of altar-pieces, many of them of large dimensions, which follow the pictorial rather than the plastic models of the time. The row of saints, below some heavenly scene portrayed above in the midst of angels, the frequent employment of *predelle*, and the preference for polychromacy, show that Giovanni was a painter at heart, whom family circumstances had introduced into an *atelier* of workers in enamelled terracotta. He freely borrowed Umbrian ideas of the late Quattrocento, and in doing so he forgot many of the lessons of his predecessors.

THE BACKGROUND.—While some few sculptors derived their schemes from the painters, most of them from Donatello onwards employed architectural forms as the background of their bas-reliefs. There are some notable exceptions, among them Michael Angelo, and his forerunner Giacomo della Quercia: Leonardo also in painting contented himself with landscape backgrounds. The habit of giving depth and scale to reliefs by indicating architectural surroundings, was in itself highly effective, and it has incidentally preserved us freely rendered sketches of classical and Renaissance art. Thus our knowledge of the Rugiasole is drawn from reliefs at Bergamo and the Certosa. Milanese artists were inclined to complicate the background by undue insistence on structural form and perspective. Donatello was more discreet, and his four reliefs in Sant'

Antonio show thorough tact in the employment of this motive. The groups are placed within or without the buildings with ease and propriety: it is too often obvious that less gifted men made their groups and then surrounded them by arches or walls. If employed as an afterthought, architecture provides a very perfunctory alternative to a frame.

In no country does the progress of plastic form, from its most barbarous stages down to the moment of supreme election, show the ordered continuity and evolution which is found in Italian art. Nowhere is the variety of form so far-reaching, the study of distance and emplacement so thoughtfully pursued, or the application of colour, whether by means of paint or differentiated materials, so harmonious. In spite of ethnological disparities, and notwithstanding recurrent wars between the various states, as well as domestic feuds and revolution, the arts remained complementary; æsthetic intercourse was seldom interrupted throughout the Peninsula. Nowhere again can one find so close a homogeneity between the various arts themselves: painter, sculptor, and architect were often interchangeable terms, and each alike owed a debt to the more humble craft of the goldsmith.<sup>1</sup> It is in relation

<sup>1</sup> INFLUENCE OF THE GOLDSMITHS.—Early jewellery was invested with profound symbolical meaning: each stone possessed its own potency, and long treatises were written on lapidary virtues. But though these traditions survived among the students of cabalistic lore, the precious stone soon degenerated into a mere brightly coloured object which

to architecture that the sculptor's art found the widest scope and the most generous patrons. deserved a rich and decorative setting. Episcopacy retained the ring, sovereignty the diadem ; the magician made his amulet or pendant, while the fibula and the brooch in some form or another was always a necessity ; but the mystic qualities were soon forgotten or ignored, though the requirements of personal adornment brought into being a powerful guild of goldsmiths. Liturgical requirements were also great. Morse, crucifix, the *textus cover*, croziers, incense-burners, and a dozen other small articles, together with more important things such as the portable altar, the reliquary, the chalice, and the *paliotto*, were in constant and universal demand. The outlay on Papal jewellery was gigantic. Boniface VIII. had 140 rings ; and the presentation of the Golden Rose and Swords of Honour gave recurring opportunities to high-class goldsmiths. But it was inevitable that the intrinsic value of such things, together with the changing tastes of the day, should bring about their destruction. Nothing was more easily pawned ; and the inventory of Paul the Second's collection throws light on the frequency with which old work was transformed into new : some fifty items are noted as having been melted down—*conflati sunt*. Paul III. destroyed the priceless jewellery found when the tomb of the Empress Maria was opened in St. Peter's in 1544. Gold to the weight of 40 pounds rewarded this adventure—the objects themselves dated from the sixth century. In secular art the activity was diverted to the sumptuous decoration of weapons and armour : Renaissance portraits of men show restraint in the employment of personal jewellery, which was far more common in France and Germany. With the development of plastic monumental art, the grand style of jewellery fell into desuetude. Largely influenced by Eastern motives, a special magnificence will be found on the altar-frontals and retabiles—*paliotti*, the bulk of which must have perished. There are surviving specimens of extraordinary richness at Citta di Castello, in Sant' Ambrogio Milan, and at the Cluny Museum : the Pala d'oro of Venice is the most famous of all. Later on, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the plastic incrustations became more prominent. The frontals of Pistoja and Florence are to some extent the frames of reliefs and statuettes, and the work of the goldsmith is merged into that of the sculptor. It is interesting to note in this connection that Gian Bologna, having made wax models for his statuettes, entrusted their execution to goldsmiths. One would naturally suppose that the influence of a training in precious metals would produce a smallness and *preciosità*, in the work of men ultimately

## 88 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

But an independent outlet was always available in the art of portraiture, a field in which some of the most signal triumphs of Italian sculpture were achieved.

called upon to use bronze and marble. This however was not the case. The sculptor, and the painter also, was frequently employed as a journeyman or apprentice in the goldsmith's shop, where he gained a refinement of touch, together with a sense of precision in form and decoration. Sometimes the influence of the goldsmith survived more directly: details on Pollaiuolo's tomb of Sixtus IV (fig. 112), and the whole conception of Verrochio's tomb of Giovanni and Piero de Medici, in San Lorenzo Florence, betray the niceties of gold transferred to bronze. The remarkable figure of Boniface VIII. at Bologna (fig. 36) is also the work of a goldsmith, a certain Manno. It is fashioned out of thin *repoussé* plates of bronze, and the right hand upraised in benediction is in the true style of the reliquary-maker. There are scores of similar arms—shrines within which the bone of some saint is preserved for veneration. The Boniface VIII., an invaluable piece of work, is however exceptional. It is only necessary to quote the names of artists who began their training in the goldsmith's craft, to show that they remained uninfluenced by everything except its useful qualities. During the fifteenth century we have the names of Ghilberti, Donatello, Simone Ghini, Caradosso, A. Pollaiuolo, Ciuffagni, Vecchietta, Verrochio, Orcagna, and Giacomo della Quercia. Later on, Cellini, Fontana, Leone Leoni, and flamboyant sculptors like Bandinelli, Raffaello da Montelupo, and even Algardi, began in the goldsmith's shop. Among painters there are Botticelli, Masolino, Ghirlandajo, Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea del Sarto, and Francia, who signed himself *aurifex*.

## CHAPTER III

### PORTRAITURE

TRADITIONS OF PORTRAITURE.—The great traditions of Roman portraiture survived in medallions figured upon Christian sarcophagi, in Consular diptychs, and through a different medium, in the paintings of the Catacombs. It was in portraiture that these classical traditions lived longest, and but little help was derived from Byzantine art, where the early fixation of types for the historical personages of Christianity, checked experiment and variety in delineating human features. The first widespread impulse towards portraiture in Christian times, unquestionably sprang from the erection of memorials to the dead. There was in the first place the effigy on the tomb, a recumbent figure as a rule, of which the portrait was posthumous ; and later on, particularly during the fifteenth century, there was something like a mania in the revival of the classical taste for death-masks and ex-votos, which were placed in the favourite church or chapel of the deceased. Being made of wax or equally perishable materials, they have practically

ceased to exist<sup>1</sup>; but they had a technical interest, for the science of casting must have contributed a good deal to the study of plastic form; and indeed it was from this desire for precise accuracy, that the exact physical records of classical athletes were preserved in the days of primitive portraiture.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless there is a deep gulf between the cast and the portrait, between the science and the art. A special measure of skill is required in treating human features. In the twelfth century the portrait proper was undreamed of: the author of the Cenacolo at Modena (fig. 3) could do no more than represent a face; and when his composition required a dozen of them, he

<sup>1</sup> From all accounts the practice became a thorough nuisance during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: records show its amazing prevalence, and Miss Cruttwell ("Verrochio," 1907, p. 101) has summarised in most interesting pages the history of this pietism, which began with Verrochio and ended with the dressmaker. By 1630 the Annunziata at Florence was literally full of these waxworks, representing all and sundry, from a Turkish Pasha down to a tame cat. At that date there were within this church some 600 life-sized figures, many of them equestrian; there were also 22,000 votive images of *papier mâché*, and 3,600 miracle pictures. All were destroyed.

<sup>2</sup> There seems no reason to doubt Pliny's statement that the early figures of Greek athletes were conventionalised, but that after a man had won three victories, the statue was actually modelled from his person: "ex membris ipsorum similitudine expressa, quas iconicas vocant." He specifies Lysistratus as having been the first to make the exact portraits of his models. Long after the Greeks had made immense progress in human form, they adhered to a conventional face, retaining the contrast of the body in action, with the features in repose. The Aegina marbles show this impassive grin on the countenances of soldiers who are sometimes writhing in agonies. There may be some ethnological explanation, but there is very little attempt at anything beyond generic portraiture.

repeated the same face a dozen times. The identity of type—one set of features to serve all requirements—preceded the advent of the portraitist proper, whether in the art of the Hellenists or in that of Niccolo Pisano.

THE ESSENTIALS OF PORTRAITURE.—With growing knowledge based on analysis, the sculptor gradually realised the essential foundations of the portrait—congruity and correspondence between the various features. Certain eyes are inconsistent with certain brows; the nose and the mouth, the jaw and the skull, must be interrelated; affording, it is true, an endless, indeed an immeasurable number of permutations, but all alike governed by the laws of structural cohesion in physiognomy. It is because this law is observed in the caricatures of Leonardo and Michael Angelo that their weird extravaganzas are still human beings, and not anthropoids. Having grasped the principle of congruity, correct modelling could then produce a real portrait; and the artist, without sacrificing the truth, is reflected in the picture. Some men see a dominant feature: in Michael Angelo's case it was the brow; in Franciabigio the eyes are the wellspring of expression. In Bernini's David, the master feature is the mouth, where he concentrates all the significance of what to all intents and purposes is a portrait study. The muscular system from the forehead downwards, and from the collarbone upwards through the throat and chin, all coalesce into the massive

and overpowering jaw (fig. 63). But what we call a speaking likeness, some portrait of a man dead centuries ago, is not of necessity a good portrait. Vitality, character, and expression, combined into the facsimile of an actual face, can produce displeasing results : Mazzoni was a warning to his contemporaries (fig. 38), and also to his successors, who throughout the period of decadence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries seldom reverted to this style of life-mask. The artist, in fact, had to avoid a double danger : on the one hand of overloading the portrait with the idiosyncrasies of the model, and still more on the other hand, of unduly impressing his own personality on the portrait. Mazzoni fell into the first error, and those whose portraits, whether in sculpture or painting, betray the unmistakable hand of a particular artist, were apt to fall into the second. The personality of the portrait should be that of the sitter more than that of its artist. Hence the signed portrait, which connotes some rivalry between the two chief actors, is in itself a menace to success. In no branch of art should the artist merge himself more in his subject than in the art of portraiture, so as to avoid any dual personality in his work ; and it is almost legitimate to say that the anonymity of Italian portraiture indicates one element of its success.

THE PORTRAIT BUST.—In the vast majority of cases the Italian bust is neither signed by its author, nor inscribed with the name of its subject.

One regrets that so many works of capital merit are unidentified, and it is upon the attribution of portrait busts that the conflict of inductive nomenclature has most frequently pivoted. The portrait was never so common as in classical times. For every portrait bust made before the year 1500, one can find twenty altar-pieces or monumental statues. But the portraits were those of individual men fashioned by individual artists. Repetitions are extremely rare. The stonecutting was itself an integral portion of the sculptor's art, and was not handed over to a separate group of craftsmen, like those who made the trade and commercial replicas of the Roman Empire.<sup>1</sup> But while the acknowledged portrait bust is relatively rare, the great monumental figures which decorate the façades and altars of Italian churches, soon came to be invested with traditions which identified them with particular individuals. The kings, prophets, and Apostles of the Florentine churches, have each in turn received names of prominent scholars and humanists, who were alleged to be friends of the sculptors, or in any case their contemporaries. It is more than doubtful if these attributions can be justified, any more than those of the sixteenth century which identified portraits

<sup>1</sup> This duplication of portraits was a recognised trade, and was necessary owing to the practice of distributing sculptured portraits with even more freedom, than was customary in the distribution of Renaissance medals. It is recorded that one Marius Gratidianus, who performed some useful function connected with the mint, was rewarded by the erection of a portrait statue in every street of Rome.

in the crowded scenes of Pinturichio, and others who painted historical and courtly incidents. In France the mediæval hero and the knights of chivalry, together with members of the royal houses and their illustrious offspring, are frankly noted, by their attributes and inscriptions, to have been portraits—posthumous it is true, and imaginary as well, but none the less as specific as the sculptor's capacity permitted. Donatello and others whose figures were subsequently particularised into portraits of individuals, to some extent suggested this custom to posterity, by investing David, Habakkuk, or Joshua, with shrewd personal characteristics which led later generations to say that they *must* have been portraits. The chief sculptors of the fifteenth century had in fact progressed so far, that every face they made was true to nature, was homogeneous and logical in structure, inevitably suggesting the personal portrait. Prolonged and strenuous efforts had been required to attain this measure of success.

THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.—The early artists of the thirteenth century learned the *abecedario* of the portrait. Their immediate predecessors, including so capable and progressive a man as Antelami, were perforce content with faces which were humanised and articulated. It is impossible to make any more favourable criticism of the figures on the Volterra pulpit. The Adoration of the Magi at Sant' Andrea Pistoja, shows that Gruamons was feeling his way—not indeed to the

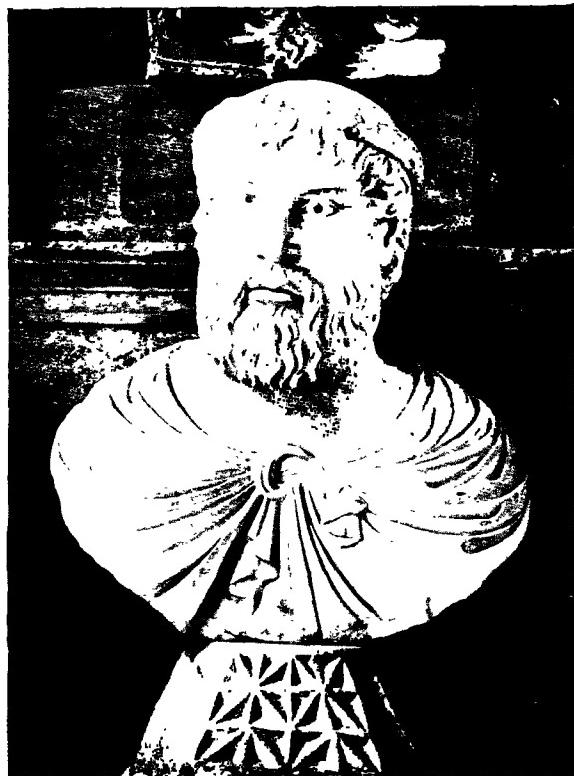


FIG. 35. PIETRO DELLA VIGNA, CAPUA.



FIG. 36. BONIFACIUS VIII, MANNO, BOLOGNA.



P. 36.

FIG. 37. FERDINAND OF ARAGON, NAPLES.

[To face p. 94.]



creation of portrait types, but towards a much more elementary stage, where the scale of the head is related to the stature of the body. The reliefs at Arezzo illustrating the seasons of agriculture, are not only interesting as records of social and domestic functions, but there is an effort at characterisation which is specially notable: these reliefs are, however, a good deal later in date, perhaps about 1220. They also mark a phase through which the art of plastic portraiture in every country must pass—the moment when the sculptor begins to differentiate between the respective physiognomies of man and woman. Archaic Greek heads are sexless; and it must be admitted that, in the times of decadence also, the faces of Antinous and Venus are often indistinguishable. Up to the middle of the thirteenth century we find the same thing in Tuscan art. The reliefs at Barga show it, and were not the sex indicated by the beards, the faces of the Three Kings would be structurally identical with those of the Virgin and the Angel of the Annunciation. The pulpit of Guido da Como at Pistoja has the same hesitation in the reliefs; but curiously enough it also contains what is perhaps the finest portrait of the thirteenth century—better than the busts at Capua, which are reminiscent of classical times, and far more realistic than the figure pieces in low relief being produced at that date in Venetian territories. Guido's pulpit, a large and heavy structure, is supported on three columns, two of

which rest on lions, the third being planted on to the shoulders of a crouching man. Tradition calls this the portrait of the artist; and it is really so distinct from the figures normally produced about 1250, it is so personal in its note and so individual in conception, that one is disinclined to pass over the tradition, as in the analogous cases of statuary produced two centuries later. This is the portrait of a man—a real living man, not merely the likeness of a face. The whole thing throbs with life; it is rather a plaintive figure, weary and bent low beneath the heavy burden. It is far more accomplished than anything by Fra Guglielmo, who must none the less be credited with decided progress; and Niccolo Pisano's pulpits show nothing quite so personal or akin to the deliberate portrait. Niccolo was more absorbed in the problems of composition than in portraiture; but the heads upon his pulpits, and there are some 350 in all, are generally modelled with the objective of lifelike emphasis.<sup>1</sup> The women's heads are better than those of the men; and his desire for dramatic pose and expression is so fully rendered, that he had to forgo many opportunities of modelling simple and unemotional faces. Niccolo modified the plastic situation as regards portraiture, but he did not revolutionise it.

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately many heads have been knocked off. Roncioni, in his "Istorie Pisane" of the sixteenth century, says that Lorenzino de' Medici committed this outrage in order to "decorate his study"—a strange sidelight upon the history of æsthetic appreciation in Italy.

FOURTEENTH - CENTURY PORTRAITURE.—Giovanni Pisano, still more dramatic, produced heads of distinction and charm, but on the whole the fourteenth century marks a pause in the development of Italian, and particularly of Tuscan sculpture. Works of signal merit and well-deserved fame were executed during this period. Orcagna's shrine at Or San Michele, the bronze gates of Andrea Pisano, the façade of Orvieto Cathedral, and tombs conceived on a scale of ever-growing magnificence, proclaimed the enhanced importance of sculpture, and the growing ability of the artist to encompass ambitious work. None the less the fourteenth century marks an epoch of study—of preparation and *recueillement* for the great period which was to follow. The portraiture which was henceforward a recognised adjunct of the tomb, was in its essence somewhat academic ; but little of it could be drawn directly from life. The monumental figures which adorned the chief façades were again correct to the point of stiffness. There is something meagre and thin ; one detects through the veil of modesty an element of caution and timidity, as though the artist were still exploring the capacities of his material. Orcagna's portrait figures (and there are a good many at Or San Michele) correspond closely with the paintings of the date, and they are equally imbued with the tradition of Giottesque sincerity ; but they do not claim to be more than studies in physiognomy. The same remark applies to Balduccio ; likewise

Andrea Pisano, a master of composition, was not a portraitist at all, though his observation and technical skill were of the highest order. The Madonnas of the fourteenth century, a specially favourite theme in Siennese territory, are strictly impersonal, the individual note being suppressed; while at Orvieto, amid many generalisations which are almost French in their amplitude, a sequence of artists seemed to shrink from selecting facial types among contemporary models. But when the portrait effigy had to be placed upon the tomb no choice was left to the sculptor. To indicate the existing standard of portraiture a few examples, such as the effigies of Henry VII. at Pisa, of Bishop Orso at Florence, of Benedict XI. at Perugia, and the Cinibaldi portrait at Pistoja, show that plenty of men could supply the specific portrait when such a course was obligatory. With few exceptions these portraits always represent the dead; and though special difficulties surrounded the treatment of funeral effigies, there can be no doubt that, from the aspect of portraiture, the task is more easy than to render a living face. Such examples scarcely afford sure ground for criticism, since the portrait is less or more mingled with convention and ceremonial. A relief such as the Coronation of the Emperor in Monza Cathedral, with its variegated types of the attendant Landgravi, supplies a basis of comparison, and thus throws light upon the whole problem. So also the





FIG. 38. — ST. JOSEPH, GUIDO MAZZONI, MODENA.



FIG. 39.

DANTE, NAPLES.

To face p. 99.

figures of Boniface VIII.<sup>1</sup> are far more valuable in this connection, than the long series of dry and

<sup>1</sup> PORTRAITS OF THE POPES.—Even if the appearance of Boniface VIII. was not commanding, his masterful personality marked him out as a fitting subject for portraiture, and more portrait statues were made of him than of most of his successors. Reference has been made to Manno's figure (fig. 36). Another effigy in marble is now in the Cathedral of Florence, having been removed from the original façade in the sixteenth century. The immobile figure in the crypt of St. Peter's, the magnificent portrait on the outer wall of the Cathedral of Anagni, and the mutilated statue now preserved at Orvieto, all bear the vivid impress of portraiture, ceremonial it is true, but following certain rules instinctively accepted by all who made Papal statues. Unfortunately these statues were never common, and many of them have perished. The Orvieto Boniface VIII. was mutilated by the adherents of Garibaldi, while Bellano's bronze figure of Paul II. at Perugia was melted down during the large ideas of 1798. Paul IV. by Vincenzo Rossi was thrown into the Tiber, and Michael Angelo's Julius II. was destroyed at Bologna. The loss of the latter is specially deplorable since in many respects it was exceptional in the life-work of the artist—being a portrait, being colossal, and being made of bronze. The Popes were seldom commemorated by portrait statues erected during their lifetime, and in nearly every case the privilege of sovereignty—the right of being seated—is implicitly recognised. This entails a massive fall of drapery, and Papal vestments could not be rendered without some risk of overcrowding the lower part of the composition. Occasionally, as in Jacobino da Tradate's Martin V. (Milan Cathedral), something in the nature of an unconventional linen pattern was introduced with effect; but such treatment is rare, and Popes were not portrayed in the simple guise of friar, monk, or priest. The statues were usually presentation pieces or else commemorative—erected by successors whose tenure of office was likely to be as brief as that of their predecessors. The effigy on the tomb is therefore the most usual form (see p. 219), and it is only in rare cases (as on the monument of Innocent VIII.) that a living portrait is introduced. Frequently as scenes of Papal achievements are found in paintings and bas-reliefs, the actual portrait is far less common than, for example, those of the Doge, or of the princes of some reigning house, like the Medici or Angevins. The act of Benediction came to be the normal pose of the Papal statue: sometimes minatory as Paul III. at Perugia, sometimes more beneficent as Pius IV. at Milan. But the desire to combine this

rather prosy figures of prophets, apostles, and fathers of the Church, which were produced in such numbers throughout the fourteenth century and at the beginning of the next century by the schools of Nanni di Banco, Piero Tedesco, and Niccolo d'Arezzo. Where the great dynasties were all-powerful, in Naples and Verona for instance, the portrait was more common as an adjunct of the tomb; and many of them are original in idea as well as effective in treatment (cf. figs. 96 and 106).

FIFTEENTH-CENTURY PORTRAITURE.—Broadly speaking, it was only in the fifteenth century that the sculptor became fully conscious of his power, although technical perfection was not attained until later on. But with Donatello, Ghiberti, Amadeo, and Luca della Robbia, we reach a generation which could blend into unison all the lessons and ambitions of their predecessors. Highly developed faculties of perception aided their naturally constructive genius. Nothing is

gesture with the majestic and awe-inspiring aspect, led the later sculptors into an excess of melodrama. In the Gregory XIII. (Araceli) one can see the effort of the sculptor Olivieri to confer upon the head some of the pontifical magnificence so freely lavished upon the robes. Algardi's bronze figure of Innocent XI. and the Urban VIII. by Bernini's assistants (in the Palazzo de' Conservatori, Rome) represent the commercialism of plastic art, Urban VIII. being made specially objectionable by perforations into the marble which counterfeit lace. It must be admitted that the portrait statues of Popes are disappointing. The model was *ex hypothesi* grave and distinguished, and one might have expected a long series of grand portraits suited to the high station of the man who was at once patron, pontiff, and king.

PORTRAITS OF MEN FIGS. 40-45  
To face p. 100



FIG. 40. BRUTUS, MICHAEL ANGELO, FLORENCE.



FIG. 41. BRONZE BOY, VENICE.



FIG. 42. GIOVANNINO, SCHOOL OF DONATELLO, FALUNZA.



FIG. 43. GATTAMELATA, DONATELLO SCHOOL, FLORENCE.



FIG. 44. PIERO DE' MEDICI, FLORENCE.



FIG. 45. BISHOP SALUTATI, MINO, FIESOLE.

To face p. 101.

more convincing than a portrait of the fifteenth century. One feels instinctively that the sculptor has grasped the full characteristics of the model. There is a total absence of flattery ; accidentals are kept within proper restraint ; and the searching analysis with which the artist sets out upon his task, is balanced by the fact, sufficiently patent, that he can disregard the self-consciousness of the sitter as easily as his own. The art of portraiture had been simmering for two hundred years, gathering strength unconsciously, and laying foundations upon which a noble fabric was erected. The portrait bust was, however, a manifestation which was unheeded by certain men of the highest rank. Andrea della Robbia, who was a born portraitist, never made an avowed portrait ; Ghiberti, Giacomo della Quercia, Michelozzo, and Luca della Robbia bequeathed no portrait bust to posterity. Moreover the portrait bust is relatively rare considering the perfection it attained, its convenience as regards size and cost, and, above all, its suitability as a personal memento. Figs. 37 to 45 reproduce good examples of the period, representing as many phases of the art. The trenchant Ferdinand of Aragon is contrasted with an idealistic portrait of Dante—one of the most eloquent specimens of its class. Three busts of young men—Donatello's so-called "Son of Gattamelata," and Pollaiuolo's so-called Piero de' Medici, together with an anonymous bronze at Venice—differ as widely in the

character of the models as in the personality of their artists (figs. 41, 43, 44). But all alike have sobriety as their keynote, an absence of superfluities: we realise that the provisional and tentative stage of portraiture has passed away. Mino's bust of Bishop Salutati (fig. 45) is a marvel of plastic skill on the one hand, and of sagacity on the other. Still more do the busts of women establish the rapid progress of portraiture: the subject presents inherent difficulties which are not only less obvious in male portraits, but far more easily evaded. Verrochio's Girl with the Flowers in the Bargello (fig. 49), and Laurana's busts at Berlin and Florence (figs. 46, 47), are among the very finest portraits ever produced.<sup>1</sup> There is something impassive in these countenances—indeed at times one detects a tinge of supercilious detachment; but of their attraction there can be no question. These dreamy faces, with their drooping eyelids, have a haunting charm rarely equalled and perhaps never sur-

<sup>1</sup> The authorship of a large series of similar busts has given rise to much speculation. They are scattered all over Europe—in Florence, Berlin, the Louvre, in M. Dreyfus's collection in Paris, at Pisa, and Vienna. From the point of view of portraiture it must be remarked that the identity of facial types places the artist on a lower scale than some of his contemporaries, as he insists unduly upon his own idiosyncrasies of interpretation. Francesco Laurana is selected as the author of this group; his chief work is the large relief at St. Didier, Avignon. This is an authenticated piece, dated 1481. The obstacle to recognising Laurana as the author of these busts arises from the fact, that the only head on this relief resembling in the smallest degree the Strozzi series of portraits, is modern—a restoration about fifty years old.



FIG. 40. BUST OF WOMAN, LAURANA GERLIN.



FIG. 47. BUST OF WOMAN, LAURANA, LOUVRE.

FIG. 50. BEATRICE DESTE, G. L. ROMANO, LOUVRE.  
[To face p. 102.]





FIG. 48. COSTANZA BUONAROTTI, BIRNINI, FLORENCE.  
FIG. 49. GIRL WITH FLOWERS, VILROCCIO, FLORENCE.

FIG. 48. COSTANZA BUONAROTTI, BIRNINI, FLORENCE.  
FIG. 49. GIRL WITH FLOWERS, VILROCCIO, FLORENCE.

FIG. 48.  
FIG. 49.



passed. Desiderio, Rossellino, to some extent Mino da Fiesole, and many imitators specified and anonymous, produced a number of busts modelled upon analogous principles, their ruling characteristic being a daintiness of treatment and a soft undulation of outline. A large proportion of these busts consists of boys in the guise of the youthful John the Baptist—*Giovannini*—and though many of them from their environment and attributes are primarily of a religious character, they are directly based on portraiture; old traditions, as in the Martelli instances, assign them to particular members of certain families. None the less it must be admitted that many of these portrait busts leave one less pleased than their admitted merits justify. The little St. John at Faenza (fig. 42) and the tiny head belonging to M. Gustave Dreyfus are without question works of extraordinary skill, and invested with decisive charm. They nevertheless represent a compromise—they are not actual portraits, neither are they purely religious figures. Far more satisfactory are the children introduced into the plastic art of Italy as angels, putti, shield-bearers, and accessories.<sup>1</sup> Modelled with precision, these

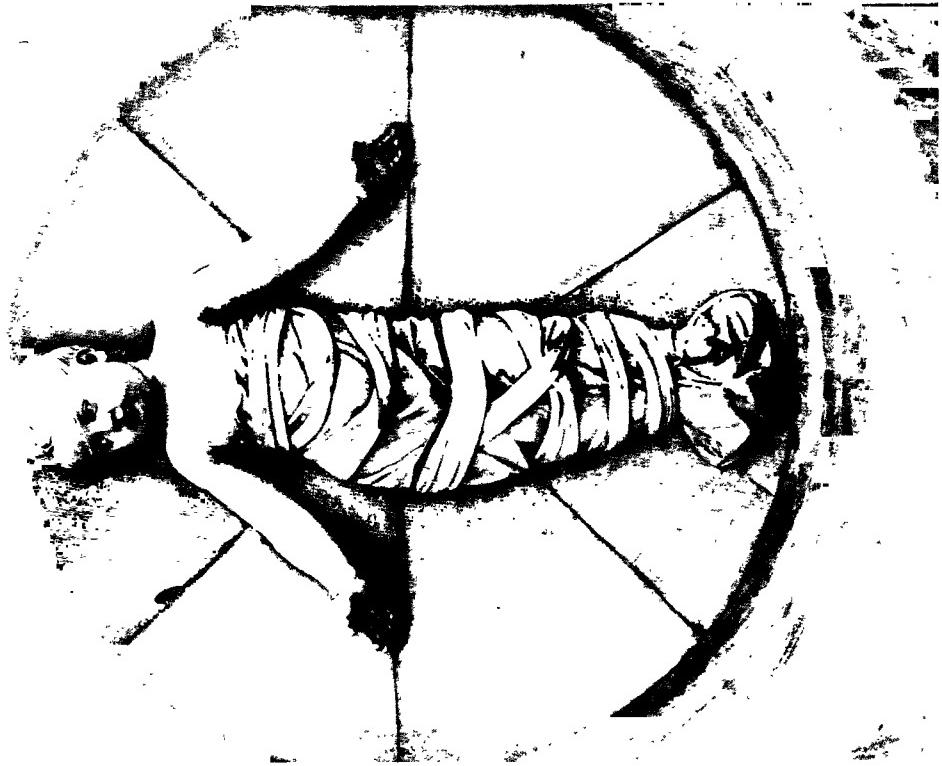
<sup>1</sup> CHILDHOOD IN PLASTIC ART.—With the early Renaissance, Italian art became enamoured of children in sculpture and painting; and although the Bacchic analogies of classical times were to some extent revived, the motive was more wholesome in conception, and far more pleasing in its results. In classical art children seem to have been introduced as much as an excuse for the nude, as from any other reason; but the frequent representation of the Child Christ made the employment of childhood

little figures helped to accustom the sculptor to an important phase of portraiture, although they

obligatory among Christian sculptors. The child, in fact, became in itself a ruling and self-contained motive, and during the fifteenth century Tuscan sculptors attained a success which has never been rivalled. The choir galleries of Donatello and Luca della Robbia are achievements of unique excellence (see figs. 53, 54). Leonardo da Vinci laid down the axiom that, when standing still, children should be depicted in shy and timid attitudes ; but the psychology of childhood is governed by the immediate sensations of pleasure or pain, and nothing can exceed the frolicsome and roguish happiness of the dancing boys on the galleries of Florence and Prato. Donatello was perhaps the artist who most delighted in the natural charm of childish movement : Luca della Robbia was more staid and decorous. The school of Amadeo was also partial to childish form, but the reserved and practical character of the Northern artists tended to limit the employment of children to scenes where angels and putti could suitably be introduced. On the other hand those strange panels in the Tempio of Rimini showing a long series of plump and playful babies, exhibit a variety of pose, sentiment, and gesture, which add much to the exotic charm of that remarkable church. It may be added that the sculptors of the fifteenth century avoided the painful exhibitions which were too common in painting, where such scenes as the Massacre of the Innocents were dramatised by groups of suffering children. It is true that in Matteo da Sienna's fresco at Sant' Agostino Siena, some of the children retain a smiling and cherubic countenance ; but the theme is inex-  
cusably harrowing. Donatello handled this aspect of sorrow with a finer tact, and consequently with a more pungent effect. Technically the difficulties were great, for the artist has to preserve the essential softness of muscle and expression inherent in childhood : by strengthening the one, or accentuating the other, the child would cease to be a child, and become an illgrown or undersized youth. This exaggeration, whether physical or moral, is rare in Italian art. Michael Angelo went very far in this direction, and in the Sistine Chapel the children are not only solemn and precocious, but their countenances are full of melancholy forebodings ; at any rate they conform to the atmosphere of that sombre composition. But Italian art, and in a special measure Italian sculpture, seized the gay and joyous aspects of childhood—revelling in the buoyancy of young life, and the light-heartedness of childish character. Their children are childlike as well as childish ; romping along

CHILDREN, FIGS. 53-54.

To face p. 104.



INNOCCENTI ANDREA DELLA ROVERE, FIGLIO DI E.



FIG. 54. CANFORA, FRIEZE DELLA ROTONDA, FIRENZE (detail).



FIG. 53. CANFORA, DONATELLO, DAVIDE (detail).

To face p. 105.

are removed from its actual province. Meanwhile the portrait relief grew more and more popular throughout the fifteenth century. Italian coins are less valuable from the point of view of portraiture than those of Græco-Roman art ; but, on the other hand, the medallist attained a distinction which places him high in the rank of craftsmen (see p. 256). Their portraits are for the most part designed as profiles ; Pisanello, in fact, limited himself to the side face, just as the Egyptian sculptors seem to have designed their monuments with the object of securing a precise and clearcut profile. The Milanese preference for bas-relief and *tondi* naturally checked genuine portraiture. Sculptured heads are numerous enough at the Certosa, but they are solely decorative ; and a most curious group of terracotta busts to be found at Crema, Bergamo, Cremona, and at Milan (where a select collection has been made), affords another proof of the value placed by Northern sculptors during the fifteenth century upon the human features as a decorative force, while seldom profiting by their knowledge to make true portraits. These busts with their elongated necks, projected out of shallow circular frames, and were used to furnish the upper portions of lofty façades. The best examples will be found on the palace now occupied by the Monte di Pietà at

the bas-reliefs, swarming among the pilasters, carrying armorial shields ; and, in short, adding bright and joyful episodes to a sculpture which, without their intervention, would have been unduly grave and serious.

Cremona.<sup>1</sup> It is to be regretted that Milanese sculptors were reluctant to employ their undoubted capacities for portraiture. Gian Cristoforo Romano, though of Southern extraction, was Milanese by residence and temperament ; his bust of Beatrice d'Este at the Louvre (fig. 50) is a happy combination of homeliness and ceremonial. Another significant work is a remarkable portrait which has found its home on a lavabo in the Certosa of Pavia, a marble bust, apparently the portrait of some prizefighter, with shaven head and a tremendously powerful chest. It affords an interesting contrast to the bronze boxer in the Museo Nazionale at Rome: this coarse, bull-necked creature is true to the life, even to the point of brutality. Mantegazza, or whoever made the Certosa bust, was thoroughly versed in the art of portraiture ; his presentation of well-favoured models must have been full of interest, though few specimens of this school and period survive from which to make deductions.

<sup>1</sup> Analogous to these projecting heads is a series of portrait busts placed within flat recesses upon tombs. They correspond as a rule with the double portrait which was common on classical sarcophagi, a treatment which enframes the head, and can give a certain finish to work of no special value. But in some cases the actual portrait is a piece of intrinsic merit: such as Matteo Civitale's bust on the Bertini tomb at Lucca. Specially notable are three tombs at Rome, each with two portrait busts peeping out of an *œil-de-bœuf*: on the Pollaiuolo tomb at San Pietro in Vincoli, on the Bonsi tomb in San Gregorio Magno, and perhaps the best example of all on the Pozzetti monument in Santa Maria della Pace, two admirable busts of children. Single busts within circular frames are also to be found on the tombs of Marganio and Battista in the Araceli, on the Maffei tomb in the Minerva, and on the monument to Benedetto Brugnoli in the Frari at Venice.

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY PORTRAITURE.—With the sixteenth century there is no such lack of material; not indeed that there are as many portraits as one would have expected, considering the activity of painters in this field; and it is during this century that the painter finally excelled the sculptor as portraitist. Though it is difficult to compare different arts, one may say that Giacomo della Quercia, Donatello, and Luca della Robbia, were greater in their exposition of plastic art than were their contemporaries in painting. On the other hand, Raphael, Sebastiano del Piombo, and Titian were greater portraitists than Sansovino, Bambaja, Benvenuto Cellini, or even Michael Angelo. It can scarcely be said that the sixteenth century produced quite worthy descendants of those who made the Laurana portraits; and it is also to be observed that many of the most prolific sculptors refrained from portraiture, except when ceremonial monuments were required. Considering the huge output of Rustici, Raffaello da Montelupo, Montorsoli, Guglielmo della Porta, Bandinelli, and Gian Bologna, it is a matter of surprise that so few really personal portraits are to be found. Painting seemed to become the natural medium of portraiture, less pretentious in aim and consequently more intimate in its grasp of personal characteristics. The directness of the fifteenth century survived into the early years of the sixteenth. Thus Sperandio's medallion of Mantegna (*c.* 1510) is as forcible as

anything of the earlier century, modelled with rare emphasis and respect; there is also something in the petrified realisms of Guido Mazzoni which is an outcome of the earlier period. But the pursuit of freedom marks the Cinquecento—freedom in all senses, in the treatment of religious themes as well as in the actual craft and composition. Sculpture ceased to be quite so inevitable as it was in the days of Donatello and Luca della Robbia: the progress of technical skill tempted artists into the byeways of experimentalism, and produced a certain inequality in their work. They searched for a large style, for something grandiose and striking; and although that which was astonishing or fantastic was reserved for later times, the loss of simplicity dates from the sixteenth century. The employment of the lay figure with its lifeless drapery, the complication of motives, and the fashionable preference for scenes from classical mythology, all militated against simple portraiture; even the picture of the Donor, always more common in pictorial than in plastic art, soon became an obsolete pietism. The harvest of local schools was gathered, and by 1550 Italian sculpture was nationalised. At the same time this freedom introduced fresh ideals of variety, and though the portrait became ceremonial and often enough pompous or conventionalised, the sculpture proper frequently shows an easy naturalism, and invariably the absence of laborious effort. Moreover

the scope of sculpture was enlarged, and one finds for instance that more careful attention was given to the *coiffure* of the model. In its essence *coiffure* must be artificial, and the sixteenth century excelled in heightening nature with the help of art.<sup>1</sup> Moreover one cannot fail to remark the cunning of the sculptor. When most extravagant he is so plausible that hostility and even criticism is disarmed ; there is always one redeeming feature in works which as a whole may be quite displeasing. Typical busts of the sixteenth century are Bambaja's Vimercati in Milan Cathedral, Cellini's Bindo Altoviti, Pacchioni's portrait of his master Prospero Clementi at Reggio (1588), and Clementi's bust of Bishop Andreasi at Mantua (1551). The bust made by Vittoria for his own tomb at Venice (1604-5) properly belongs to the sixteenth century. All

<sup>1</sup> Early sculptors conventionalised the hair : the four prophets on the main porch of Cremona Cathedral have their hair punctiliously combed out, and the beard again is curled at the end, making a row of ringlets at its extremity ; no doubt following the custom of the Lombard *beaux* of the twelfth century. Likewise at Borgo San Donnino and Modena (figs. 10 and 3) the hair is treated in a quasi-mechanical manner. To come to a much later date, Verrochio is perhaps the earliest sculptor who could carve the hair to resemble a living growth ; but Tuscans never matched the Venetian painters in their portrayal of hair. The sixteenth-century sculptors trusted less than their predecessors to undulations and waviness, to suggest its vitality : they could make it spring from the brow with a perfectly natural grace. Moreover they were not called upon to represent the outlandish *coiffures* of the late empire—freaks of fashion which recurred periodically during classical times. Some curious records exist of the importance then attached to the hair : as a mark of great respect, hair of beaten gold was added to certain statues, and one is not surprised to hear about thefts of this appendage.

these portraits are correct. All are modelled with restraint and indeed with dignity; but there is a formality about them which disguises their unquestioned merits, a coldness in the sculptor's interpretation of the subject, rather than in his modelling or treatment.

HONORIFIC PORTRAITURE.—On the other hand there is a group of portraits which err in the opposite direction. These are the official portraits placed on the public squares, and also to be found, though less frequently, upon tombs. Honorific statues are however rare: as a rule a compliment was expected from posterity, which was slow to act. Contemporary figures are moreover uncommon, and since they usually represent a ruling prince, they are *ipso facto* excluded from republican states. The Doge in this form is scarcely to be found throughout Venetian territories, while it has already been pointed out that Papal statues are uncommon. It was in Tuscany that these parade portraits were most usually found. Where the monument was equestrian the grouping sufficed to invest it with a dignity of pose and structure, too often absent in the grand-ducal statues. These latter are conceived in a spirit of benignant urbanity. The expiatory monument, or that erected to compensate for an act of injustice, was needless: in its place we have statues which record some act of clemency towards a defeated power, such as Francavilla's figure at Pisa, where Ferdinand I., with a gesture of





*Proprietary of Mexico*

FIG. 55. — CHARLES V., E. LLONI, MADRID.



*Proprietary of Mexico*

FIG. 56. — COSIMO I., B. CLEINT, FLORENCE.



*Proprietary of Mexico*

FIG. 57.

PAUL III., NAPLES.

[To face p. 111.

polished unction, comforts the fallen figure of Pisa, who for the moment is attended by two or three plump children. At Arezzo and Livorno there are somewhat similar figures of this prince, a soft boneless personage, placed within an artificial *mise en scène*. Giovanni delle Bande Nere, on the piazza of San Lorenzo Florence, is more energetic, and the statue bears less clearly the imprint of the courtier.<sup>1</sup> To some extent it was inevitable that the patronage of the great patron should be reflected in the artist's handicraft. Moreover the tendency to generalise, to produce majestic figures rather than the portrait of a living prince, was typical of this century; while a liking for ostentation, together with a taste for colossal figures (see p. 304) and opulence of material (see p. 286), all combined to discount simple and direct portraiture, as it was understood in the Cinquecento. Even the smaller portraits where no public effect was required show this avoidance of precision. Three portrait busts may be named in this connection—Leoni's Charles V. (fig. 55), Benvenuto Cellini's Cosimo I. (fig. 56), and the famous bust of Paul III. at Naples (fig. 57). One of them is needlessly pre-

<sup>1</sup> *E son tutto vostro a la scolturesca e non a la cortigiana*, as Annibale Caro concludes one of his letters to Tribolo the sculptor ("Lettere familiare," Venice, 1574, i. 65). On the whole, however, the sixteenth century preferred compliments to flattery; and there was but little to recall the classical comedies of individuals declining the well-earned tribute of a portrait statue, or of their subsequent generosity in themselves defraying the cost of their own monuments.

tentious, another is overcharged with decoration, and in the third the sitter is too obviously posed for his portrait in a genial frame of mind. All three busts are really fine, but in each case there is an abstraction of the model—not by emphasising its quintessence, but in the uniform direction of displaying the more ceremonial aspects. The sculptor's reluctance to be content with modelling what he saw is unconcealed. The great monuments on the tombs are naturally enough generalised in their character, and a display of magnificence, notably in the case of the Popes, was no doubt justified : reference will be made to this branch of plastic art later on. Occasionally, however, there is a deft combination of officialism and portraiture, as on the monument to the Viceroy of Naples (probably by Nola), 1570. The tomb itself is a huge detached structure no less than 45 feet square, decorated with allegorical figures and bas-reliefs recording special events in the political career of the Duke. Above this cenotaph are the kneeling figures of Pietro da Toledo and his wife. Here the portrait is far more specific than was customary at this date : the kneeling figure in fact, representing as it does something personal, and a gesture of humility as well, was of necessity dissociated from the abstractions of the courtly world.<sup>1</sup> Tomb por-

<sup>1</sup> The motive of the figure kneeling in prayer was almost entirely limited in sculpture to funeral monuments, whereas in painting it was possible to convey the motive as Donor of an altar-piece on a more

traits, however, were posthumous ; the original of the portrait had been laid to rest, and the family or descendants who erected the memorial would naturally wish the deceased to be portrayed as a striking effigy. Hence these generalisations.

CONVENTIONALISED PORTRAITS.—The prevalent system went even further, and at one time purely conventional portraits were most fashionable. They were distinct from the monuments erected by public spirit to a famous citizen, like Benedetto da Majano's busts of Giotto and Squarcialupo (Duomo, Florence, 1490). Another group, for the most part made during the same century, corresponds to the cult of the tutelary genius. The Cathedral of Como has large statues of the two Plinys; Virgil is the hero of Mantua, Baldesio of Cremona ; Plato and Aristotle are constantly found in paintings of the glorification of St. Dominic or St. Thomas Aquinas ; while elsewhere the minute scale, and consequently with greater ease and frequency. The French Renaissance carried the motive to its highest development ; in Italy its employment was sporadic. The fact that the deceased was represented as a living man has its bearing on the art of portraiture, exceptional it is true, but of particular interest in Italian art. One of the earliest examples is the kneeling figure of Nicholas II. (?) in the Lateran. Verrochio designed another kneeling figure for the tomb of Cardinal Forteguerri at Pistoja, while Leone Leoni, when working in Spain, handled the theme with freedom and success. Mention should also be made of the rather capricious Lodovico III. in Sant' Andrea at Mantua, of a similar figure in Genoa Cathedral, and of Cardinal Caraffa at Naples, one of the most happy examples of the pose, and more personal, because more devotional, than the figure of Pietro da Toledo. Urban VII. is also represented as a suppliant on his tomb in the Minerva. An uncommon treatment will be found on the Acuna tomb at Catania.

quasi-heraldic aspect of some popular legend such as the wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, was substituted for the reconstructed portrait of some great man of antiquity. Such forms of hero-worship were discouraged by the priesthood in favour of the canonised saint, and by the ruling houses in favour of their own dynasties. One other aspect of the tendency to typify the human countenance may be mentioned, though here again the bearing upon the evolution of portraiture is oblique. Andrea Sansovino and his pupil Jacopo devoted particular care to the development of what one calls "beauty." Andrea did not die until 1529, but he retained many characteristics of the fifteenth century. A Tuscan by birth, he worked much in Rome and Northern Italy, while his reputation was such that he accepted an invitation to visit Portugal. Jacopo carried his theory to its logical conclusion. Elegance became his dominant theme: courtliness and strength alike were sacrificed to attain the picturesque. His Venetian environment contributed to this conception of plastic art, though it must be observed that in architecture Jacopo showed great resource, and a vitality which was absent in his sculpture; furthermore the grand portrait of Thomas of Ravenna (fig. 19) is isolated, unlike the rest of his work. "Beauty," as he saw it, differed from the ideas of the two previous sculptors who had thought out a theory on the subject. Andrea Pisano and Andrea della Robbia de-

liberately called beauty to their help ; but whereas Sansovino required a generalised and abstract beauty, making it the governing and central characteristic of his art, the earlier men employed it as an adjunct or accessory subservient to other purposes. Jacopo sought out beauty for its own sake, and was satisfied if he evolved a countenance in which the features were symmetrical, the expression pleasant, and the demeanour full of grace. Granting the restricted sphere of this ideal, one which from technical causes it is far from easy to grasp, the success of Jacopo was assured. A long series of Madonnas, Charities, and Virtues establish Sansovino's sense of the charm and gentleness to be drawn from the features of womankind. But these things not only produced mere prettiness and delicacy ; a more heavy penalty had to be paid.

MICHAEL ANGELO AS PORTRAITIST.—It is almost a contradiction in terms to speak of Michael Angelo as a portraitist. Throughout his long life he was always gathering up the threads of knowledge, and as often distributing the fruits of his learning. His interpretation of physiognomy was general, not specific ; heroic, not ikonic. The last thing he dreamed of was to make a “speaking likeness.” If he studied the individual it was with the object of deducing a type, and he himself was the product of a century rather than the child of his generation. In Greek art the individualisation came after the generalised

portrait; with Michael Angelo the process was reversed, and with advancing years he became less and less tolerant of portraiture. At times he was obliged to fashion the portrait, but his study was so profound, and he so completely merged himself and his personality in some vast worldwide psychology, that his so-called portraits were fused into types. Of the Julius II. we cannot speak, as no record of its appearance remains; but the Brutus is his chosen image of the Liberator, while the two Medici princes at Florence are provokingly impersonal, and their respective identities have actually been a source of dispute. There is no inscription on these tombs, and but small provision was made for an epitaph: it was a rare condescension on the part of Michael Angelo to give names to the prophets and sibyls on the Sistine roof. One of these princes is called *Il Penseroso*, and corresponds to those supreme inductions of art — the Pericles in the British Museum, the Plato of Naples; to Leonardo's *Gioconda* and to the *Melancholia* of Albert Dürer. One may contrast this broad aspect with the niceties of nomenclature applied to some classical goddess—Venus Genetrix, Venus Mammifera, Venus Callipyge. Of Michael Angelo's influence upon his contemporaries and pupils it is only needful at this stage to say that, so far as portraiture was concerned, no improvement or progress can be recorded; indeed it has been argued that his influence upon

plastic art was more harmful than good. He concentrated within his own ambit all that was vital, and left to less gifted followers that which was superficial, extravagant, or vague. A school of sculpture sprang up which was guided by a deceptive and misplaced inspiration, tending ultimately to perfunctory workmanship, and what was far more serious, to insincerity. To such men exaggeration was an end in itself. They laid stress upon one feature, mood, or expression, to the exclusion of others : what was once geniality degenerated into a simper ; the anxious face became terror-stricken, and the grave countenance ended in a scowl. Above all, the portrait proper tended to perish in a mass of stilted unrealities, where the man was lost in his robes of office, and amidst the flattering ceremonial of his best clothes.

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY REACTION.—Reaction was inevitable, and reaction was in the air. The Counter-reformation with its attendant ferment, the recognition of the Society of Jesus, and the redistribution of power throughout Europe (each one of which laid the foundation of its protracted influence during the lifetime of Michael Angelo), all combined to unsettle the basis of intellectual society, and during the process forced sculpture, as well as the other arts and sciences, into untrodden or long-neglected paths. It is difficult to trace the bearings of these complex movements upon sculpture—the art which is least

susceptible to criticism, and which responds but slowly to external influences. The phenomenon must be stated, and its proofs will be found in altered environment and novel aspirations. Michael Angelo's genius bore fruit long after his death, and his supremacy was less fully recognised *inter vivos* than by ourselves ; our retrospective survey makes him tower above his contemporaries and followers alike. But while his influence produced an aftermath even discernible into the eighteenth century, the protest against his *largesse* was prompt ; and it was precisely in the sphere of portraiture that the reaction was most complete. Synchronous with the generalisations of artists who succeeded the great master—Gian Bologna, Ammanati, the two Leonis, and active men like Tacca, Danti, and Francavilla,—there arose a school of portraitists dissenting almost aggressively from the prevailing standard of taste. These sculptors are but little known to us, and like the great artists of Gothic France, they remain, at least for the moment, anonymous ; their admirable work is overlooked by the student and ignored by the photographer, or else it incurs

<sup>1</sup> See the most curious letter of 1581 (printed in Gaye, iii. 440) about Gian Bologna's ambition to equal Buonarotti, and the opinion expressed by the Grand Duke among others, that he had actually surpassed him. To this may be compared the attribution of Gian Bologna's *Fiorenza* to Michael Angelo, an odd misappropriation, while the Pietà in St. Peter's was ascribed to Cristoforo Romano. Baccio Bandinelli, of all people, was firmly convinced of his own superiority to Michael Angelo.

the hasty rebuke of being called Baroque. From 1580 until the close of the seventeenth century a series of busts was erected in the Roman churches, so skilful in technique, and so discreet in their naturalism, that they hold a worthy place in the evolution of portraiture. They are interesting as being essentially Roman in extraction, and the number which survives is very large. Those in the churches are, of course, memorial portraits.<sup>1</sup> They are as a rule small, and occupy humble positions upon the pilasters and lateral walls; they generally represent what we might call the professional classes—scholars, notaries, and priests—as distinct from wealthy laymen and highly beneficed clergy, whose tombs occupied more prominent places. The actual monument usually

<sup>1</sup> E.g. twenty in Sant' Agostino, twenty-two in the Araceli, seventeen in Santa Maria Maggiore, twenty-one in Santa Maria del' Popolo, and no less than thirty nine in the Minerva. Outside the province of Rome, though portrait busts are numerous, they lack the personality to be found in this particular group. Naples, for instance, has plenty of portraits of this period, such as the series of archbishops in the Cathedral, which cannot compare with the Roman series, though many of them are clever. The artists lacked penetration—failed to seize the personal note—and in consequence the busts are largely *bottega* affairs, with no merit when dissociated from their discursive and florid inscriptions. The poverty of Venice was still more marked. Vittoria, who wrote his own epitaph ("qui vivens vivos duxit e marmore vultus"), left no tradition of portraiture behind him, and indeed from the sixteenth century onwards sculptured portraiture never secured a firm foothold in the Republic. In the big monuments there are good heads treated as warriors or virtues, but the portrait proper is rare. The competition of portrait painters had been overwhelming, and so the sister art remained embryonic: with a little encouragement which never came, there were artists in plenty who were capable of doing really well.

consists of a marble setting enriched with *intarsia* and variegated marbles (designed like Maioli bookbindings), while the central feature is a bust of the deceased, preferably white marble, but very often with additions of porphyry or giallo antico, to add colour to the dress : white and black marble are also juxtaposed with effect. One cannot help being impressed by the naturalism of these portraits. The artist made the most of these keen, shrewd faces ; their intelligence and their sanity are measured by his own, and he detected the exact point at which imitation had to stop short. The presentment is restful and calm, very different from the big sculpture of the period. It is also subtle and pungent, making an atmosphere for itself, and here again offering a singular contrast to concurrent phases of art. One may also note in passing that women's portraits are absent from this group. The men are always shown *sans cérémonie* ; wigs are seldom used, and one feels that there are as many periwigged gentlemen in Westminster Abbey as in the whole of Rome. Meanwhile the sculptor preserved his own individuality ; these portraits synchronised with an art rapidly falling into decadence, but the artist did not desert his native style in order to attract waning interest by adopting foreign eccentricities. There was no reversion to the Imperial mania of copying Egyptian models, nor did they contrive those *chinoiseries* which amused the age of Louis Quinze. Their critical faculties were too sharp

to admit such exotic epithets. They were modelling faces full of character, like those of the Dutch syndics and bankers painted by Mierevelt and Franz Hals. The Italians who corresponded with the later portraits of Vandyck were portrayed by Bernini.

BERNINI AS PORTRAITIST.—Sculpture had now reached its social apogee, and it centred round Lorenzo Bernini. His birthplace was Naples, and throughout a long career, which extended over no less than nine pontificates, one may perhaps trace a certain extravagance due to his Southern origin. He was a man of great material wealth, sought after in the fashionable world, extending his patronage with a paradoxical freedom and conferring a dignity upon the art to which he owed his own existence. His portraits naturally fall into three classes—the personal bust, the funeral monument, and the idealised type; and of these the first group is for the moment of most significance. Like the nameless men who executed the Roman busts, Bernini was influenced by the Counter-reformation and certain reactionary tendencies to which reference has been made. He was more addicted to generalisation than these contemporaries, but far less so than Gian Bologna and his school. His portrait busts are consequently more studied and precise; the personal note is observed with closer attention; and although a cursory glance at some of his portraits, for instance that of Francesco d'Este at Modena

(fig. 58), might lead one to class it with earlier work, it will be found to be far more specific. In point of fact the Este figure is superb. The clouds of drapery and luxuriant *chevelure* were incidental to this particular prince, and the sculptor was obliged to reckon with details which threatened to outbalance the humanity. Bernini subordinated all this vanity and pomp to the main theme. Fifty years later analogous problems proved insoluble. Two other busts at Modena mark the decadence, less perhaps of the sculptor than of the model. These also represent Este princes, dandies with no chins, without backs to their heads, and with the noses of ant-eaters—the very essence of pettiness and *mesquinerie*. One wonders what chance even the greatest sculptors would have had with such caricatures. Bernini, however, had to deal with more vigorous types. His Cardinal Scipio Borghese, the carefully wrought bust of Costanza Buonarelli (fig. 48), and some less authenticated works (such as "The Nun" in the Palace of Mantua) are admirable—direct, forcible, and true. These qualities were less cultivated in the Papal tombs, where Bernini allowed himself a freer hand, in order to bring the memorial figure into harmony with the allegorical virtues and their informal setting. The pride of office demanded a scale of magnificence which in turn enforced a generalised treatment of the departed Pope. Though these tombs are gigantic (the bees on the Barberini tomb being as big as partridges), they conform to



FIG. 59. — HIRSH LAMI, SPENAZZI, FIGORINI.  
Foto p. 122.



FIG. 60.  
FRANCESCO BERNINI, MODENA.  
Foto p. 122.



the huge proportions of the Basilica ; but none the less their size made an individualistic treatment of the Papal effigy imprudent. Urban VIII., and in a lesser degree Alexander VII., are handled with extraordinary brilliance. They are sufficiently personal as regards likeness to come within the category of portraits, while certain impersonal aspects seem to make them the memorial of a pontificate rather than the tomb of a Pope. Meanwhile the widespread influence of the *Grand Monarque* and his court, was stimulating the production of monuments all over central Europe, lacking precisely those qualities which mark the work of Bernini and his immediate school. Where Bernini's example was unheeded, as at Venice, sculpture got out of hand : figures on the principal tombs (see p. 328) have no magic touch of generalisation, while as portraits they are frequently pompous and fantastic. Bernini was called upon in his idealised types to evoke an imaginary portrait with majestic and awe-inspiring presence. His equestrian portrait of Constantine must be pronounced a failure ; but the Empress Matilda in St. Peter's more successfully embodies the ideal of posthumous portraiture, than analogous work on the canvases of Guido Reni and the Bolognese painters. Some of Bernini's saints

<sup>1</sup> Outside Naples, the monument of the Queen or Benefactress is rare. The tomb of the Empress Margaret at Genoa is now dispersed ; that of the Queen of Cyprus at Assisi has also been mutilated, while the tomb of Catherine Cornaro in San Salvadore at Venice remains unfinished to this day. A bas-relief records the incident of the Queen

may be included in this category: Santa Bibiana, Santa Lodovica Albertoni, and Santa Francesca Romana, correspond with the Empress Matilda, and although more devotional, are meant to be idealised entities ; but all alike betray the presence of an artist's model, the perils of which were acute at this period (see p. 322). Bernini's genius was too robust and he was endowed with too much commonsense to fall into excesses, but none the less he was living on the edge of a precipice when portraiture became inadequate, and when sensationalism and declamation replaced more abiding moods. His portraiture, it must be remembered, represents one phase of reaction, and his appeal to nature was coloured with romanticism. He returned to realities, and theoretically Bernini ought to have made more portraits than he did ; putting aside the series of tombs, it is in portraiture that he excelled. In this particular branch of sculpture his electicism was restrained; his respect for truth is shown in his habit of making the subjects of his portraits move about and engage in conversation, so as to seize the living face ; and finally it is difficult to exaggerate his technical skill. Others who came later could rival his dexterity, but none could match his perfect mastery of material : few sculptors before handing over her crown to the Doge, but the ungrateful Republic was content with this poor acknowledgment. Recognition of the Empress Matilda was likewise postponed until the seventeenth century, when political movements again focused attention upon her celebrated act of piety.

or after Bernini could give marble the look and texture of skin. He did not die till 1680. His successors in portraiture preserved few of his high qualities and exaggerated most of his shortcomings. The eighteenth century surrendered portraiture as a fine art to the French, who in turn sent numberless sculptors south of the Alps to adorn Italian churches with some of their biggest if not most praiseworthy monuments. Portraiture waned. Here and there one finds an atavism, the unexpected offspring of forgotten ancestry. Spinazzi's statue of the lawyer Lami in Santa Croce (fig. 59), and that of Piranesi in Santa Maria Aventina at Rome, recall the great sculptors of the past, and show that it was impossible to kill the traditions of portraiture which for three centuries had conferred such lasting distinction upon Italian art.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANATOMY AND THE NUDE

THE TRADITIONS OF "BEAUTY."—"The essential thing in art is thoroughly to understand how to paint the nude." Cellini's dictum is true, and its truth was never more fully acknowledged than during the sixteenth century. It was the supreme test, the touchstone by which criticism was guided. For generations past sculptors had been striving to achieve success. In much early sculpture no real effort had been made to portray mankind except in so far as it was accidental to the religious subject in hand. The Renaissance and most of its sculptors attempted the greatest variety, æsthetic as well as intellectual, and called to their aid the knowledge drawn from anatomy. Their ambitions were manifold, and reference has been made to their wish to create what was striking and grandiose; but they were also searching for that changing and undefinable asset called "beauty." This ideal was always before their eyes, and every generation based its desires upon some different conception. "Beauty" after all is a relative term, since appreciation varies from age

to age. With the Greeks it was symmetry and muscular perfection ; with Fra Angelico something seraphic ; with Donatello something true. Falconet and Sansovino tried to make everything winsome and gracious ; Amadeo saw beauty in composition rather than in the individual ; even Rodolfino and the primitives must have had some glimmering idea of what their own contemporaries would praise as being beautiful. Few, however, pursued beauty for its own sake and as an isolated abstraction—beauty, that is to say, as people realise it to-day, when whole schools devote their attention to painting pretty faces or modelling comely limbs. Agostino di Duccio came nearest to this modern view of æsthetic success, while Andrea della Robbia produced a type of face which makes an eloquent and lasting appeal. With many of the Greeks beauty was measured by geometrical accuracy ; less so in the art of Imperial Rome ; and least of all in Italian sculpture, even when the classical revival was at its height of popularity. And here it may be observed that the ethics of Christianity have been needlessly charged with apathy and even hostility towards beauty. Christian virtues require but little muscular strength, and beauty is never an essential ; moreover there was much which savoured of squalor and ugliness in the records of asceticism. The Thebaids contributed but little to art. At the same time the essence of manhood is not necessarily beautiful, though it may become so by cir-

cumstances ; properly speaking there is no beauty in Donatello's St. George. It has many qualities which, owing to faulty analysis or weak vocabularies, are called "beautiful" for short. Donatello did not yield to beauty, for beauty is often tantamount to compromise, and occasionally to absolute surrender. In the same way the artist should not be frightened of what is ugly. Italian artists often proved their faculty of investing an ugly person with some fugitive charm, and of detecting the pleasing feature or expression which always lies hidden in the least attractive face or the most unpromising landscape.

THE CANON OF MEASUREMENT.—Moreover, Italian art was little hampered by the "canon"—a code of local laws and traditions which fettered initiative all over the world. Every country has produced at one time or another some schedule of formulæ to guide the artist, and indeed a canon is both natural and necessary, for we judge a dwarf or deformity by an involuntary canon of measurement. It only becomes misleading when applied with excessive zeal, when imposed as a check upon creative forces, or where it limits the faculties of imagination. It is said that the Egyptians used the nose as the unit of measurement as applied to the human figure, while the Greeks may have taken the length of the foot for a similar purpose ; modern teachers have said that the height of a man should be in exact relation to the size of his head. Here the

canon may be useful, and in each case the rough-and-ready measurement is so flexible in its application, that no harm would spring from its employment; but the canon too often became a tyranny. Pausanias literally traces animation, proportion, and detail, in painting and sculpture, to the progress of geometry, mechanics, arithmetic, and anatomy—that is to say, to a code of rules. He lays equal stress on the four milestones towards progress; and though one must guard against imputing to the theorist undue influence upon the craftsman, there can be no doubt that the canon was a potent and living force. It was believed that scientific measurements could be drawn up, which, faithfully followed, would inevitably produce the ideal statue. The *torso* and limbs could of course be more easily reduced to generalised forms, could be more accurately systematised, than the countenance. The proportions of early Greek art were correct, as we surmise; then, as the limbs became longer and longer, the head lost its predominance and became subsidiary; it failed to dominate the body, and what was symmetrical soon became soulless. Diodorus Siculus tells a story of a statue which, although made in separate halves by different men, none the less fitted exactly when joined together: it must have been a faultless statue, but it must also have been detestable, for it can only have had one characteristic, namely pre-ordained mechanical symmetry. Gauricus reproaches the

Romans for having no Latin word for symmetry,<sup>1</sup> but Roman art was not seriously affected by the borrowed word or the foreign canon. They relied but little upon theoretical measurements, and although centuries later it was customary for prominent men to commit their codes to paper, Italian art remained singularly free from the pedantic and deadening rules which governed the East. The most celebrated of the Renaissance treatises were written by Alberti, Cellini, and Leonardo da Vinci. Albert Dürer wrote about human proportions, an essay which seems to have annoyed and puzzled Hogarth. All these books, with their elaborate diagrams and mathematical formulæ, represent no more than the ingenuity of famous men who took care that their *obiter dicta* should neither hinder their inventive genius, nor bind the opinions of their colleagues and pupils. Herein lay the crucial difference between West and East. The Byzantine canon which takes its roots in the iconoclast movement of the eighth century was infinitely more stringent. It was not merely a guide to human proportions, but it controlled the sentiment and the *mise en scène*. The priest and his theology shared the responsibility of the artist, making the latter into a mere journeyman ; the artist had to act upon the recipe handed down by his ancestors, and he had to accept it as an immutable precept, like some law of astronomy or physics which could never change.

<sup>1</sup> "Pomponius Gauricus de sculptura." Florence, 1504, p. b iii.

Even in portraying the human form it is impossible by obeying the most meticulous laws to secure identity of treatment; but the hieratic canon went much further. It set forth exact injunctions about pose, colour, gesture, and position; the only permissible variety was derived from the details—brocade or background, coronet or vestment. Face and figure had to conform to the archetype, which began by being ideal, and has not yet ceased to be obligatory. The canon embodied a superstition, and it has produced a sterile uniformity. It became a monomania, and their love of symmetry which took the form of monotypes, is shown by their tolerance of the replica and by their specialisation: to this day the Russian eikon is made by half a dozen men, each one of whom is versed in rendering one particular feature or detail. Thus it comes about that Eastern painting (sculpture being almost non-existent) has undergone no movement or evolution for several hundred years—*il n'y a rien de plus mort que ce qui ne bouge pas.* It is possible that the archetype in Italy would have been equally durable had the belief which created it been so constant as that of the East. The Greek canon was contrived to idealise the human form and the Eastern canon to stereotype the religious scene; but the Italian canon of the sixteenth century, fluid and irresponsible as it was, came into being from a whole-hearted desire to stimulate æsthetic ambitions. The canon of the Greek

critic and that of the orthodox priest, were followed by a canon of the Italian artist; it was to the study of anatomy, with the object of thoroughly understanding how to portray the nude, that the chief care of the latter was devoted.

INFLUENCE OF BIBLICAL ICONOGRAPHY.—Meanwhile, however, the study of the nude was not accomplished without some struggle against ecclesiastical influences. It is true that Biblical history cannot be depicted without its use, and although the Creation of man is not found in the Catacomb frescoes, scenes from the Garden of Eden are not uncommon: incidents of the Passion require its constant employment. The explanation of the discouragement which undoubtedly prevailed, quite apart from ethical causes, can be traced to classical traditions associated with nude statuary. In Greece the nude was natural; the ideals of the Palæstra, the admiration for physical perfection, and the freedom of a warlike race, were reinforced by a generous climate and superabundant marble. If Homer clothes his soldiers in armour Scopas takes it off. Moreover employment of the nude was justified by the association of Mercury or Hercules with feats of strength. Venus arose from the sea, and the spring of water was typified by a youthful undraped figure: the familiar motive of the nude girl with a vase or urn beside her, is drawn from the idea of a bath or a river. Thus the nude was self-explanatory and it required no excuse. In Rome, again, the

Emperor could be suitably portrayed as a nude statue from his kinship with the gods. Christianity surveyed all this, and seeing its pagan origin, and still more its pagan development, pronounced it to be anti-Christian. While prepared to absorb the unessentials of the early religions, Christianity was prejudiced against the nude (distinct from what is called beauty), as a manifestation of heathenism ; in any case the nude as employed by the Greeks would have been exotic, a forced condition of life, needless in Italy and on the whole mischievous. On two counts therefore, both of them well founded, the Western Church determined to limit the nude in plastic and pictorial art to the necessities of Biblical iconography. While the early Church despised the human form and its frailties, they fortified themselves by somewhat elaborate precautions ; and so long as art remained the acknowledged handmaid of religion this control could be easily exercised. Niccolo Pisano, though almost exclusively occupied with Church work, laid the foundation of enfranchisement ; and from the thirteenth century onwards secular art, tentatively at first, but with extending zeal, made its bid for popular approval. The patronage of municipal authorities, the erection of triumphal arches and palaces, and the growing appreciation of laymen naturally impinged upon the monopoly of the Church ; and although the fourteenth century scarcely produced a nude figure which was not

directly drawn from Biblical history, the employment of the nude as decorative details made considerable progress. Certain miniature figures on Andrea Pisano's gates must be noticed as being exceptionally skilful for their date.

THE STUDY OF ANATOMY.—With the fifteenth century study of anatomy began, casual at first and no doubt empiric as well, but with ever-growing enthusiasm. Vasari says that Luca Signorelli painted from the dead body of his own son, and that Antonio Pollaiuolo was in the habit of dissecting corpses. His criticism of the latter (whose interpretation of the nude, especially in the frescoes, was faulty) is curious : *egli s'intese degli ignudi più modernamente.* He means that Pollaiuolo saw in the structure of the human frame the basis of all art, the keystone of composition, and perhaps also a more dominating principle. Such was Vasari's own view, and Michael Angelo founded the whole realm of art upon the organic structure of mankind.<sup>1</sup> The fifteenth century was less confident, and their success may be partly attributed to the fact that they did not overcentralise their study of the nude. With them it was a means to an end. The ultimate objective was not overlooked or merged into the technical processes ; and although in exposition of anatomy the fifteenth century was quite surpassed by the sixteenth, some of the most effective and pleasing figures date from the

<sup>1</sup> "Le membre dell' architettura dipendono delle membre dell'uomo."

DAVID, FIGS. 60-63.  
To face p. 134.

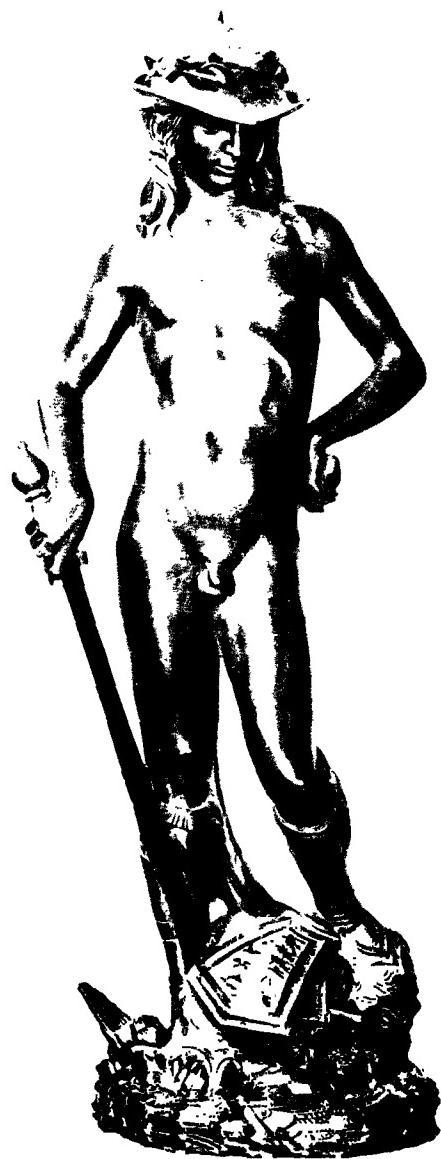


FIG. 50. DAVID, DONATELLO, FLORENCE.



FIG. 51. DAVID, VERROCCHIO, FLORENCE.



FIG. 62. DAVID, MICHAEL ANGELO, FLORENCE.



FIG. 63. DAVID, BERNINI, ROME.

To face p. 135

earlier period. One may contrast two figures of David of the Cinquecento, with two of the sixteenth century (figs. 60 to 63). Donatello and Verrochio conceived the idea rather differently, but in each case there is an earnestness of purpose and the vestige of painstaking thoughtfulness, which in themselves have an attraction. Michael Angelo's figure is big and accomplished ; one feels that the last word has been spoken. It is a nude figure rather than a David, and it is one of the few statues by the master of which the countenance is the least expressive part. St. Sebastian again was a popular personage, and perhaps owing to the circumstances of his martyrdom figures of this saint were largely multiplied from the moment when study of the nude became universal. A standing man with his hands tied behind his back gives little scope for variety of pose ; an angle at the elbow and a projecting knee are almost inevitable, and there is consequently a very close analogy between the statues reproduced in figures 64 to 67. Matteo Civitale makes a gentle callow youth ; Maini is rather more emphatic. Rossellino's fine figure at Empoli marks a great advance, while the example from Florence shows Benedetto da Majano at his best. This St. Sebastian has all the *naïveté* of the early Renaissance and anticipates the sterling qualities of the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The life-

<sup>1</sup> Other examples of the fifteenth century remarkable as expositions of the nude are by Andrea della Robbia at Arezzo, and by an

sized Eve at the Doge's Palace must be mentioned (fig. 68); Antonio Rizzo is the sculptor. Although the figure is rather hard and also too rigid in outline, it must be regarded as a very noteworthy landmark; but its qualities in such a connection border upon faults, since the artist, though far from attempting a realistic treatment, has laid stress upon bone and muscle, hair and hands, and has refrained from generalisation just where broader handling would have been most suitable. Nor was it beyond the power of the fifteenth century to impart a wide interpretation to the human form. Close at hand Rizzo could have studied some of the most admirable nude figures to be found in the whole realm of Italian art: the three groups at the outer corners of the Palace combine with a precision of touch all the restrained generalisation which is required for an ideal figure. These groups, however, are exceptional. The unity of line and the harmonious blending of limbs and torso, in short the fundamental law of physical structure, were not really studied until the sixteenth century. The little-known Andromeda at Orvieto (fig. 69) and the famous statuette by Cellini (fig. 71) may be compared with Franciabigio's Venus (fig. 70); they show the wisdom and experience of the High

anonymous sculptor in the Reggio Museum, a singular type which reminds one of archaic Greek art. An interesting figure is upon the façade of the Certosa, and another made of terracotta is in the large cloister, the only nude figure there.

SE - SEBASTIAN, FIGS. 61-67  
To face p. 110



FIG. 64. — ST. SEBASTIAN, M. CIVITATE, LUCCA



FIG. 65. — ST. SEBASTIAN, TU. MAINE, ROM.



FIG. 66. ST. SEBASTIAN. ROSELLINO, EMPOLI.



FIG. 67. ST. SEBASTIAN. B. DA MAIANO, FLORENCE.

To face p. 137.

Renaissance, and they also proclaim its judgment and discretion.

MOVEMENT AND ANIMATION.—In the evolution of Italian sculpture there was always a tendency towards exaggeration, and in treating the nude no effort was made at first to check this development. With the growing taste for animation and for exciting scenes from classical mythology, sculptors had to master the laws of motion. Movement had to be instructive, to appeal to reason ; and as the semblance of anatomy changes with every gesture, artists did well to study its underlying causes. In early sculpture the absence of movement is explained by the ignorance of these laws. Gruamons, Rodolfino, and Guido da Como (cf. figs. 5 and 6) scarcely knew how to render movement : the immobility of their figures, which it may be remarked also involves the absence of natural pose, is a characteristic of the twelfth century. Benedetto Antelami found an ineffective substitute in the gesture and inclination of the body, and even Niccolo Pisano trusted to dramatic expression on the face to reinforce movement, which was only partially rendered by the body. Knowledge of anatomy solved the problem of movement in plastic art, and furthermore enabled the sculptor to give *rationale* to a figure which was at repose. The Greek proverb which indicates that a statue should be immovable, *ἀγάλματος ἀκινητότερον*, is misleading ; even when sitting down or standing still some expenditure

of muscular energy is required, and even during sleep the muscular system is not wholly at rest. Many of the figures on the Parthenon frieze, when in isolation, appear to be immobile; but they are none the less full of essential movement, which is expressed by a consistent trend in one direction. Thus the stationary figure can suggest movement and be imbued with that elasticity and suppleness which compose its mainspring. Donatello's Judith, with the avenging sword arrested at the moment of supreme crisis, and the stately *sarabandes* which move across the canvases of Andrea del' Sarto, are from one point of view immobile; but they have the potentials of movement, and are consequently far more vital and animated than figures one recalls in earlier work, where activity and even violence are expressed, but without creating that definite impression on the spectator's mind. Movement and pose are in fact correlative. The Annunciation is the scene which most clearly shows their contrast, and Donatello's relief (fig. 76) affords a good illustration of this dualism, where the angel, suddenly stopping, conveys the message by the pose of the figure, while the Virgin shows surprise and alarm by the contradictory direction of the feet and countenance.<sup>1</sup> The other extreme is found in the marbles of Ægina, where impassive faces are combined with alertness of the body. Movement is

<sup>1</sup> Bocchi mentions this, and it is one of the few analytical criticisms in the entire book. (Cinelli's edition, 1677, p. 316.)

VENTS, LVE, ANDROMEDA, FLOS, 68-71.  
To face p. 138.



FIG. 68. FVE, A. RIZZO, VENICE.



FIG. 70. VLNUS, FRANCIABIGIO, ROME.



FIG. 69.

ANDROMEDA, ORVIETO.

86



FIG. 71. PERSEUS GROUP (detail of base),  
B. CELLINI, FLORENCE.

To face p. 139.

a late manifestation in Italian art. Devotional sculpture could often dispense with it, and the average altar-piece or façade required a calm and decorous composition in which the immobile saint or Apostle played the predominant part. But to meet the demand for secular and classical scenes, in themselves more animated and permitting the freedom of the group, fresh lessons had to be learned. Movement alone could solve these complex problems of drama and emotion ; the discovery of its secrets synchronised with the effective study of the nude and with the decline of ecclesiastical patronage. Progress was rapid. By the middle of the sixteenth century Gian Bologna was able to make the Mercury (fig. 72) which is little short of marvellous. He no longer relied upon fluttering drapery to indicate motion, like the Tuscan painters of the Quattrocento. The poise of the figure (like the draped Venus of Samothrace) more than sufficed to indicate a buoyancy and lightness which are almost unsurpassed—Mercury flies along, carried through the air by the throbbing wings attached to his helmet and to his ankles.<sup>1</sup> Bernini's Apollo and

<sup>1</sup> THE INFLUENCE OF MATERIAL.—The influence of material upon the development of sculpture is pertinent in this connection. The employment of bronze, or rather the discovery of its static qualities, greatly enhanced freedom of composition. The Mercury, for instance, would be impossible in marble. Moreover bronze was a cheaper material, at any rate in the sixteenth century, thus allowing scope for ambitious and experimental grouping which otherwise must have been out of the question, while the faulty or unsuccessful bronze could always be melted down again. The

Daphne is equally remarkable when one remembers that this moment of suspense is rendered in marble, and such statues could not have been

employment of wood was soon superseded in Italy. Vasari says that it was habitually used for crucifixes, but that it can never receive *quella carnosità* or *morbidezza* of metal or stone. In Egypt wooden sculpture is uncommon because wood is rare; in Bavaria it is common because a good texture of stone was difficult to find, and early Byzantine sculpture was frequently fashioned of wood. In Italy, and no doubt elsewhere, wood was the primitive medium of architecture and probably of plastic art as well. St. Dominic's cenotaph was made of wood, and the great castle of Loches was only replaced by a stone structure in 955, though on the other hand a most curious record exists of permission being granted to some early Franciscans to erect their buildings of stone owing to its being cheaper than wood. Few countries are better endowed with the former material than Italy, and endless stores of foreign marbles had been imported for centuries past. Moreover the Italian quarries produced grades adaptable for all kinds of objects, from the rough sandstones suitable for garden deities, to the grey Lavagna of which chimney-pieces, doorways, and so forth were made. The marbles varied from the dark reds of the North to the sparkling brightness of Carrara, and all alike seem to possess some special qualities; in one case the marble would take the surface of ivory, others would bleach white, some take a special hue when weather-beaten, and all alike have a consistency which allows the sculptor the fullest latitude of polishing or finish. At the same time, although hard and durable, marble is brittle, which Gian Bologna made a source of complaint in 1581 (Gaye, iii. 441). The High Renaissance was the second age of bronze. Old traditions were kept alive in Italy by the Eastern artists who erected the church doors, but early Pisan art was almost wholly unversed in its use, and had it not been for the bellfounders the science of casting might have perished altogether. Even as late as Donatello their help was invoked ("numquam fudit ipse, campanariorum usus opere semper"—Gauricus, page 1). Michael Angelo protested against having to make the statue of Julius II. in bronze on the score of inexperience. Marble was his chosen material, and restless struggle could not be more profoundly expressed than in the *abbozzi* hidden away in the Grotte Buontalenti. Bronze, however, has its own merits. The *patina* which reflects the light, chiselling which indicates decoration, or even neglect which generates rich green tints, are all





FIG. 72. ALFRED RYK, GIAN BOTOLONA, FLORI SC.F.  
Foto L. Taddei



FIG. 73. SAI, BARTHOLOMÉW, M. D'AGRAMI, MILAN.  
Foto L. Taddei



FIG. 74. SLAVE, MICHAEL ANGELO, LOUVRE.  
Foto face p. 141.

made without perfect familiarity with human anatomy (fig. 28).

EXAGGERATION AND REACTION.—As time went on this study had to progress, for anatomy changes like everything else in the physical world. One need only compare a row of Imperial busts with any group of fifteenth-century portraits, and there is nothing in classical art which resembles the head of Christ. Moreover, if one compares the nude, as depicted by Mantegazza and Amadeo, with the normal product of Tuscany, one would deduce that the Northern race of men were quite differently built. Their prominent stomachs and indented backs, which suggest curvature of the spine, are doubtless the result of a special school of study, but allowance might also be made for some physical divergencies. The Cinquecento worked really hard, and, displeasing as are many of their nude figures, their technical skill was extraordinary. The statues by men like Montorsoli and Ammanati were really essays in anatomy. St. Bartholomew in Milan Cathedral, by Marco d'Agrate (fig. 73), marks the summit of misplaced and tasteless brilliance. The saint, according to history, has been skinned; and the upright figure therefore displays the whole mechanism of the human form. It is astonishing and insincere; but however much

incidental qualities of a very noble material which is equally suited to vast treatment like Mazza's reliefs at Venice, and the Chapel of San' Januario at Naples, as to the tiny productions of the medallist.

it reminds one of the operating-room, and however little it suggests heroic martyrdom, its consummate power is undeniable. These artists showed more pride in displaying their anatomical learning than in any other branch of their art ; their draped figures were at times laughable, but never so completely ridiculous as their nude statues. Having mastered the art of rendering suppleness or movement, they exaggerated its play by throwing their models into contortions ; and what was really unpardonable, they put children into attitudes which were forced and strained, into positions which would entail an impossible trial upon their undeveloped muscles.

Thus the causes of reaction were set to work ; the pursuit of movement, scenes from mythology, and the classicism of the day (see p. 285) ended in the study of the nude as an object in itself. The Counter-reformation, with its protest against the revival of paganism in literature and art, proved a telling factor in the dispute, and the lessons it then inculcated survive to this day. From 1580 onwards, the Roman authorities have shown a timorous (and at times half-hearted) objection to nude statuary, or more accurately to the paganism with which it was associated in their minds. The fine figure of Justice on the tomb of Paul III. has been ruined by some rubbishy drapery made of zinc, which every *petit bourgeois* from the Trastevere taps with his dirty fingers. Leoni's figure of Charles V.

at Madrid was originally nude<sup>1</sup>; but fifteen years later armour was fitted on to it: as a concession to the sculptor the armour can be detached. Ammanati made an abject apology to the Accademia del Disegno for the nudity of his statues,<sup>2</sup> and Bandinelli's Adam and Eve were removed from the high altar of Florence. And while these practical protests were being enforced<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From classical associations this was a privilege of royalty, and Napoleon, with the true instincts of imperialism, was thus represented. His life-sized portrait by Canova in the courtyard of the Brera palace at Milan is a very fine thing. Voltaire had less excuse for such an *extravaganza*. "Madame Necker," he writes, "me fait ses plaintes amères de ce que Pigal veut me faire absolument nu: voici ma réponse . . . décidez de mon effigie . . . soyez sûr que, vêtu ou non, je suis à vous jusqu'à ce que je ne suis plus rien" (Letter to d'Alembert, March 18, 1771).

<sup>2</sup> The letter is printed in Baldinucci, 1769, vi. p. 87. It is in the nature of an open confession in which the sculptor (then eighty years old) expresses his *acerbisimo dolore e pentimento* at certain figures on the Florentine fountain and elsewhere: in point of fact he was less blameworthy than many of his friends. He compares such statues, from which the public eye cannot escape, with books which the public had to search out for its own entertainment, and on general grounds of morality he condemns nude statuary. Still more interesting is his suggestion, though small stress is laid upon it, that study from the nude is not essential for artistic success. In this he differed from most of his contemporaries. Titian was certainly great, and his technical knowledge of anatomy, as understood by the plastic art of the day, was slender; likewise, during the famous period of Greek sculpture anatomy was but little studied. "*Corporum curiosus*" was applied to Myron because of his unusual researches into the human structure. On other grounds Ingres, the painter of *La Source*, used to discourage its study among his pupils, fearing that science rather than emotion would govern their compositions: one wants to reproduce a body rather than a corpse.

<sup>3</sup> The custom of adding drapery was also widespread. The work was usually carried out by some inferior craftsman, and in any case

public opinion went into raptures about Bernini's Ecstasy of St. Theresa—a statue which is voluptuous and almost sensualised.

MICHAEL ANGELO AS MASTER OF ANATOMY.— Even Michael Angelo did not escape the charge of heresy.<sup>1</sup> Vasari says that he was given facilities to study anatomy in the hospital of Santo Spirito. Whether this be so or not, he seems to have worked hard; but in the main his knowledge was intuitive. He was himself ambidextrous, full of fire and energy, and although relatively speaking his output was small, owing to vexatious delays and the fickleness of patrons, from the first he grasped the whole as opposed to the particularised aspect of human form, and he may be considered the greatest master of anatomy and the nude. Yet there is something scornful in his treatment: he swept across the marble, and his own moody restlessness is reflected in every stroke of the chisel. There is an odd sort of analogy between his attitude and that of Rubens. But Michael Angelo found his supreme the unity of the statue must be infringed by such adventitious enhancements. Matteo Civitale's Adam and Eve at Genoa, and his St. Sebastian at Lucca, are disfigured by stucco; the St. Jerome by a follower of Donatello at Faenza is likewise draped with painted rags. During the eighteenth century the Senate of Bologna was asked to treat Gian Bologna's Neptune, but refused to deal with the problem. *Per contra* tradition has often grown up to account for ill-fitting drapery, by alleging that the figure was originally nude: thus the statement that Pinturicchio's Susanna in the Borgia rooms was draped as an afterthought or *pentimento*, is mythical.

<sup>1</sup> "Due Dialogi," by Giovanni Andrea Gilio da Fabriano (1564), a fatiguing essay.

vehicle in the human frame. He showed no love of nature, no desire to enrich his backgrounds with landscape or architecture: the human figure was the central theme to which everything was subordinated. Form sufficed—even if anonymous. The magnificent athletes on the Sistine roof (called Slaves for scarcely adequate reasons) are tributes to the majesty of health and vigour; but he did not worship mere strength or mere beauty: he produced nothing to compare with the Discobolos or the Apollo Belvedere. What appealed to him with irresistible force was strength which connoted power, and, above all, power held in reserve. He shows this preference by drawing as many scenes as possible from the Old Testament in contradistinction to the prevalent habit of illustrating the Gospel history. The primitive ages of mankind afforded the best opportunities for this, and he likewise showed preference for the closing prophecies of the New Testament. Then again the *Torso* interested him profoundly, especially when grouped or allied with other figures. Drapery he only used when imposed by the subject, partly because it represents after all an accidental of mankind, still more because it hindered his freedom of interpretation. A draped figure, even when most subtle and grand, like the Fates from the Parthenon, can scarcely be expected to convey the complete measure of inevitability; for drapery must hide this or accentuate that, and cannot

fail to conceal, however slightly, the correlation of limb and trunk, or the harmonies of line and movement which Michael Angelo disposed with an exactitude which was almost scientific.<sup>1</sup> His

<sup>1</sup> DRAPERY.—Drapery was a special characteristic of Roman, as opposed to Greek art, and its traditions as well as its form survived long. Great variety sprang up with the birth of local schools, but though difficult to define there seems to have been some continuity of purpose. In Emilia Rhenish influences may be seen, as on the façade figures of Sant' Omobono at Cremona (twelfth century) an almost rectilinear method of pleating the cloth. Northern artists never seemed quite at ease in modelling drapery : Amadeo and his group reproduced in marble the clay models into which they had dug holes to indicate drapery, a stiff treatment under which the natural flow and communication of the material was lost, while the dependence of drapery upon what it conceals is ignored. Lomazzo says that Bramantino used to put wetted drapery upon lay figures, and this might well account for an artificial appearance. Even Bambaja, with all his technical insight, was tempted to treat drapery (on the tomb of Gaston de Foix) in such a way as to counterfeit paper. Tuscan artists were more successful ; they kept their personality distinct, and one may contrast the grace of Benedetto da Majano with the crinkled folds of Verrochio, or the metallic angles of Pollaiuolo. Drapery came to be admired for itself. Bocchi's panegyric of Donatello's St. George was written to eulogise the special merits of its costume, vivacity, and beauty. The book, which was written in 1571, errs in the direction of dulness ; but it throws a good deal of light upon the state of æsthetic appreciation, and the terms with which drapery is described, indicate the great importance Bocchi attached to it. Thus the toga worn by Donatello's St. Mark is called *prudente e religioso*. The Italians loved drapery for its inherent qualities of colour, texture, and design ; they excelled in treating it with informality, respecting its soft and yielding nature—a contrast to much that one finds north of the Alps. In Rheims Cathedral, for instance, the linen pattern which often looks hard in wood, being rendered in stone loses all its meaning, just as the *Faltenwurf* of Bavarian costume often suggests an uncomfortable degree of starch. Drapery as an accessory to composition rather than to the human frame, is familiar in the gorgeous canopies and hangings so common in Venetian paintings, but in sculpture drapery should, as a rule, be more closely dependent upon the actual figure. In the great tomb of Alexander VII. the figures are not

faults were not faults of anatomy so much as of attitude and form. Sometimes he placed his figures in impossible contortions : they play stately tricks and assume exaggerated postures.

spaced with Bernini's wonted decision, and the reason is that he was thinking out a scheme in which drapery was to play an extensive rôle. A vast marble counterpane of russet hue winds in and out—prodigiously clever, and in itself admirable ; but it spoils the tomb. Still more startling is the monument of the Doge Valier and his wife in San Giovanni e Paolo Venice, where yellow satin rendered in marble is the chief theme, and as about seventy yards of it are represented the effect becomes overpowering. Meanwhile the costume side of drapery tended towards excesses precisely analogous to those associated with nude figures. Agostino di Duccio's clinging and close-fitting drapery was copied, and ended in sheer extravagance. The intermediate stage was more satisfactory, where the play of the drapery over the limbs was treated with restraint (cf. Prospero Clementi's tomb of Prato in Parma Cathedral, 1542). But the imitation of drapery, the attempt to render the thinnest garment in the hardest material, though quite successful, was vicious in principle. The critics complained that the mattress which Bernini placed under the Hermaphrodite was so well wrought, that it distracted their attention from the actual statue ; and everybody is acquainted with similar tricks where lace (and indeed pot-hats and umbrellas) are copied with meticulous exactitude. It is this passion for accuracy where detail is objectionable, which made Leonardo da Vinci condemn contemporary fashions, “ . . . *fugire il più che si puo gli abiti della sua età* ” (Trattato 541). Reynolds also railed against the dress of his own day, picturesque as we now consider it. It was not, however, the superfluities of drapery, or the despotism of the gala dress, which led artists into excess ; it was rather a counter-reaction springing from the reaction against the nude, which showed itself by a technical adherence to drapery, but disposed in such a manner as to combine it with everything which was held blameworthy in studies from the nude. Many examples exist. The *capo d'opera* is Corradini's Pudicizia at Naples (fig. 84). Modesty is here embodied in a woman of supremely vulgar proportions—it is a life-sized portrait—tightly swathed in gossamer, which in effect makes the poor thing look quite grotesque. Without this apology for a chemise she would be so obscure as to escape notice. Veiled she is stupid—a sort of Hypocrisy disguised as Pudicizia. Bandinelli's truisms were infinitely preferable to this.

Moreover there were certain fancies which he regularly followed; the projecting knee, for instance, or one sloping shoulder. It was only in small things that Michael Angelo would tolerate an obsession. One must remember in criticising these fantasies of pose that few of his greatest plastic works are *in situ*, and fully related to the surrounding architecture and setting which were originally planned. The chief misfortune of Italian art was the episode which prevented the completion of the Laurentian Chapel. Sculpture and architecture, possibly painting as well, would have been combined with unspeakable grandeur and skill. And in which branch of art was Michael Angelo greatest? It was for sculpture that his personal preference was avowed. In some countries one art had predominated: in Greece, sculpture; architecture in Babylon; painting in Spain. But, like his native land, Michael Angelo can scarcely be said to have had a central art; perhaps indeed he was equally great in them all.

## CHAPTER V

### RELIGIOUS THOUGHT ALL-PERVADING

IT is a commonplace that art begins by being hieratic or religious, and that the personal, secular, and humanistic epochs, are subsequent developments. This was the case with Italian sculpture ; and from the moment of its enfranchisement in the twelfth century until the decadence had set in during the seventeenth, not only the great majority of sculptors, but also the larger part of their output, were devoted to illustrating the lessons of Christianity. Religious dogma changed from time to time ; new saints were canonised and old ones lost their popularity ; but the devotion of the artist to religious scenes was as faithful as it was prolonged. Religious thought was in fact universal and all-pervading. Giotto, Dante, and Niccolo Pisano may be taken as three early types of the prevailing sentiment, while the mottoes of the civic authorities, the preambles of their laws, and the decoration of their municipal buildings all bear the same testimony. Even the commissions lavished by lay patrons, guilds of merchants and handicrafts, were religious in their character.

Religion was a governing theme in their every-day life, and it was likewise the goal of their artistic ambitions. Thus it comes about that busy and successful men like Ghiberti, Luca della Robbia, and his nephew Andrea, produced little or nothing derived from sources external to the religion of their day. Few of Donatello's works are dissociated from Christian scenes, and monuments which in themselves are secular, such as portraits or the emblems of strength and valour, were as often as not ancillary to Christian sepulture. Even when the truths of Christianity ceased to be accepted in their entirety, at any rate when certain doctrines were looked upon with apathy or disfavour, there remained a source of profound inspiration. Indeed "Truth" as such is a lame stimulus to art; and the truths which do not turn towards Faith for their interpretation, such as the laws of steam or gravitation, cannot inspire except through the medium of allegory; nor can plastic forms of religious art other than symbolical, be developed among a nation of sun-worshippers. Christianity, on the other hand, was from its nature palpable and human: some of its developments (Calvinism for instance) happily refrained from expressing their doctrines in plastic art. But its central features, beginning with the Creation of man and ending with the Atonement, provided scope for incessant and unlimited activity of the craftsman. Sanction for an endless variety of scene and treatment was afforded by the Texts:

the altar, shrine, pulpit, and tomb, together with the whole range of decorative sculpture applied to the church fabric itself, represented the concrete demands of popular beliefs. And as St. Paul called himself *δημοτικάθος*, all his human qualities and defects could be suitably portrayed. The attributes and passions with which Mars or Jupiter was credited, no doubt offered a wide field for invention ; but St. Paul, or rather Christianity itself, could appeal to emotions, such as altruism, sacrifice, abstract piety, or the triumph of faith, which found no place in classical mythology ; and at the same time Christianity was more closely defined than the religions of Greece or Rome. The religious and secular aspects of classical theology coalesced and overlapped in a hundred ways. Apollo could appeal to either aspect of religion or taste : not so Christianity, and with all its human and humane elements, with all its respect for mankind and its destiny, and notwithstanding the important part played in it by modern or recent personalities, a great gulf is fixed between secular and religious art.

PROGRESS OF ICONOGRAPHY.—The early traditions of Christianity were of course literary rather than iconographic. Many generations passed before any fixation of type could be expected, and it was still longer before the scriptural scene could assume a generally accepted form. During the epoch of the Catacombs one therefore finds a symbolical treatment of scenes which subsequently

became ultra-pictorial. The events of the Passion were largely ignored, partly from motives of secrecy, but still more because respect seemed to dictate an allegorical representation. Moreover the Gospel story, though nearer in point of date to those who made the earliest frescoes and sarcophagi, was in a sense less authoritative than it ultimately became. Spurious texts and corrupted readings, not to mention apocryphal chapters and verbal traditions, were more common during the fourth and fifth centuries than in the day of Niccolo Pisano, when the canonical books had been largely expurgated of extraneous or unauthenticated matter. Hence one finds much latitude in the earliest Christian records: Christ, for instance, is not infrequently absent from the Raising of Lazarus<sup>1</sup>: the number of the Magi varies, and incidents which are described with precision in the Gospels are rendered with small regard to accuracy. The canon came to the elucidation of these pictorial witnesses, and must have exercised a restraining influence from the first, controlling the personnel and environment of each great event as conceived by the artist. No doubt its influence, especially in the East at a later date, was nefarious; but in early days, indeed before the canon as such had been formulated, some such check upon undue divergence was necessary. It was not until the Pisan

<sup>1</sup> Cf. mosaic in St. Priscilla, Rome, and also the famous ivory pyx of the sixth century in the Vatican.

Renaissance that a working scheme of Christian iconography was laid down. Sculpture at first was too inexperienced to formulate the plastic compositions, too timid to visualise those complex groups and planes which were needful in carving a great Biblical scene. Painters and mosaicists were bolder. The nature of their art permitted experiments from which the primitive stonecutter would recoil, and it is precisely because the traditions of complex iconography are older in painting than in sculpture, that the latter art, even when technically superior, failed to depict scenes which painters had always found significant and instructive.<sup>1</sup> The religious sculpture of Italy

<sup>1</sup> It is of course obvious that certain events must be less suited to plastic than to graphic art: thus the Apocalypse and the Last Judgment, or occurrences involving the introduction of nature and the elements as principals rather than accessories—miracles dealing with the Flood, the Creation, with fire or water—cannot well suggest themselves to the mind except as canvases or bas-reliefs. It was not merely the technical difficulties of casting, carving, or of disposing intricate masses of figures, which deterred the sculptor. It is true that the Last Judgment was for a brief space popular among Pisan sculptors, and examples will be found at Ferrara and Orvieto: some of the later Popes also had the scene (which demands treatment by bas-relief) portrayed on their tombs; but as an Event it was rarely represented in Italy. France, on the other hand, showed great partiality from the first; and early traditions, or perhaps a more formal sanction, allowed the scene to be reduced to bare necessities, to the essential actors in the great drama, thus giving sculpture a chance which did not present itself in Italy. Moreover, apart from the stimulus of iconographic tradition, it must be confessed that Italian artists neglected or overlooked many telling and fruitful themes. Even the miniaturist drew but little inspiration from the Psalter, which north of the Alps, received an unparalleled wealth of illustration, while the Apocalypse, which appealed with mystic intensity to the Spaniard, seldom figures in Italian art. Another type

consequently turns upon the governing themes of Christianity, upon the sacred persons of Christ and the Virgin Mary; and although plastic art lends itself more readily than painting to propagating various forms of polytheism (never eradicated in the Peninsula), it will be found that sculpture remained true to this ideal; and all the familiar saints, Apostles, and prophets are subordinated as types or witnesses to the central personages.

THE MADONNA.—It would be difficult to say which is the most popular motive in Italian sculpture; probably the Madonna and Child, since it combines the human and divine aspects of religion, and likewise connotes the sentiments of love, intercession, and promise. Certainly there are few other subjects which enjoyed so prolonged a vogue, or which were considered so all-essential to the decoration of church and oratory. But the evolution of this group, apart from records of technical progress, casts an interesting light, not exactly upon doctrinal development, but rather upon the personal attitude adopted towards the Madonna by the sculptor and his patron. On the whole one may say that their attitude was evangelical; certainly

is rare—that of the *Orante*, the Byzantine figure of intercession; again it is singular that Christ raising Lazarus from the dead should be so infrequent, as one cannot imagine a more apposite subject for a tomb. Christ blessing the little children, a motive equally fitted for relief or free-standing sculpture, is unaccountably absent; and few scenes are at once so eloquent and picturesque.

up to the end of the fifteenth century it was defined and circumscribed by the text of the Gospels, and no special predilection was shown as in France for drawing incidents from *Les Miracles de Notre Dame*, and from the *Legenda Aurea*. Sculptors showed more reserve than painters, recognising at all events in this respect the limitations of plastic art, and the mystic allegories connected with the *Mater Dolorosa* are rarely found. None the less a wide interpretation was permitted. The hieratic Madonna of the early bas-reliefs, grim and rigid, is partly explained by the stiffness inseparable from tentative modelling; but there is also probably an element of design in this serious unhumanised treatment. The school of Pisa took up a different position, and it is very usual to find the Madonna displaying the Child to the worshippers—a motive which was apt to become rather awkward, as there are cases where the little Christ seems to be almost thrust away by the Virgin. Giovanni Pisano's statuettes give one this impression of a child starting from its mother, the two figures being as far apart as the laws of balance will permit: though there is little to represent motherly love, there is much which suggests contemplative adoration of the Child.<sup>1</sup> The idea of maternity is also Pisan in origin. On Niccolo's pulpits we have a Juno Lucina, a real goddess of maternity, concentrating the classical types of virtue—an

<sup>1</sup> Cf. particularly that at Santa Maria della Rosa at Lucca.

idea capable of much extension, for the Madonna is depicted as Mother of God, Mother of the Church, Mother likewise of Siena or other towns which placed themselves beneath her special protection. Hence there sprang two fundamental types of the Madonna in which sovereignty and motherly love were alternately predominant. The latter idea was most popular, being the simpler emotion, more personal to the spectator, and also easier for the sculptor. In old art the Madonna is old. With the desire to invest her with womanly attributes, she is naturally made to look younger, until in Michael Angelo's Pietà youthfulness is carried to its utmost limit. Moreover the *genre* aspect came to be introduced, where the child is playful and the mother affectionate or even amused. What was picturesque and attractive both in Madonna and Child (in this as in most other connections) submerged the primary lessons and deflected the trend of the whole original conception. The desire to find a maximum of beauty for the Madonna or to give charm to her Son, produced works which are undoubtedly most pleasing : Sansovino in the North, and still more notably Gaggini in the South, made scores of charming figures, tender and winsome ; and if their successors ended in sentimentality or affectation, it must be admitted that the motive of the Madonna and Child is that which lent itself least readily to decadent handling. The fact is that, while these

tendencies were at work, the artist was always checked by the other aspect of the Madonna upon which he himself might also be engaged, where she had to be portrayed as Queen of Heaven. The pathos and homeliness of the Madonna with her Child were kept within bounds, if at the same time the idea of sovereignty was being prominently displayed; and although there is failure wherever the idea of dignity is the result of palpable effort, sculptors succeeded in conferring a grave and even majestic air to the Virgin, long after they were impotent to make a stately monument of cardinal or prince. Of all forms that of the Madonna seated is the most gracious and reverential. Among sculptors there were often technical objections from the point of view of disposition, and consequently the full-sized Madonna (sculptured in the round) is rare. Painters were not beset by this hindrance, and as time went on they paid more and more attention to this motive, until the chair became a pedestal, the pedestal a throne, and finally the throne itself was adorned with a sumptuous *baldacchino*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was only when a comprehensive order was given to decorate an entire chapel or altar that the sculptor could suitably make a free-standing Madonna. Three examples in particular may be mentioned: Donatello's altar at Padua; the Zeno Chapel of St. Mark's, Venice; and the Laurentian Chapel at Florence; and it is typical of Michael Angelo that he should have treated the Madonna on a colossal scale—one of the few temptations to which Baroque sculptors seldom yielded. It may here be observed that, notwithstanding the prevalent cult of the Madonna, the theme scarcely appears in Ghiberti, Nanni di Banco, or Donatello: apart from the superb bronze of the latter at Sant' Antonio

TENDENCIES TOWARDS COMPLEXITY.—The tendency to insist, perhaps unduly, upon externals and environment was still more marked in the Annunciation, and with painters like Carlo Crivelli, architectural opulence seems to be the chief ambition. Pinturicchio carried the idea still further, introducing a proleptic explanation, for in his version the Virgin is discovered reading a book opened at a page where there is an illumination of the Annunciation itself.<sup>1</sup> Here again sculptors were more discreet, even if their materials were less tractable, and they treated the Annunciation and the analogous episode of the Visitation with singular judgment. Of course one finds extravaganzas such as Mocchi's figure, where the angel descends in a whirlwind, while the Virgin springs from her seat like some tragedian who combines protest with alarm (fig. 75). The Annunciation in fact inspired respect, and, however indifferent their success, sculptors did their best to show deference. Moreover, the composition itself was replete with possibilities; though best fitted to bas-relief it affords a contrast of pose between the two figures, there is only one authenticated relief (though many are ascribed to him), a tiny medallion a couple of inches in diameter, also at Padua. Still more remarkable is the absence of the Madonna and Child from the shrine of St. Augustine at Pavia, a huge cenotaph enriched with no less than two hundred statuettes and bas-reliefs. On the other hand, Luca and Andrea della Robbia could find no more absorbing theme, and the Madonna is figured in nearly ninety per cent. of their works.

<sup>1</sup> This picture has been removed from Santa Maria de' Fossi into the public gallery at Perugia.

FIG. 75. VIREAS OF ANSENCIANO,  
MOCHI CRAFTED



FIG. 76. ANSENCIANO, DECORATION, EARTH CO.

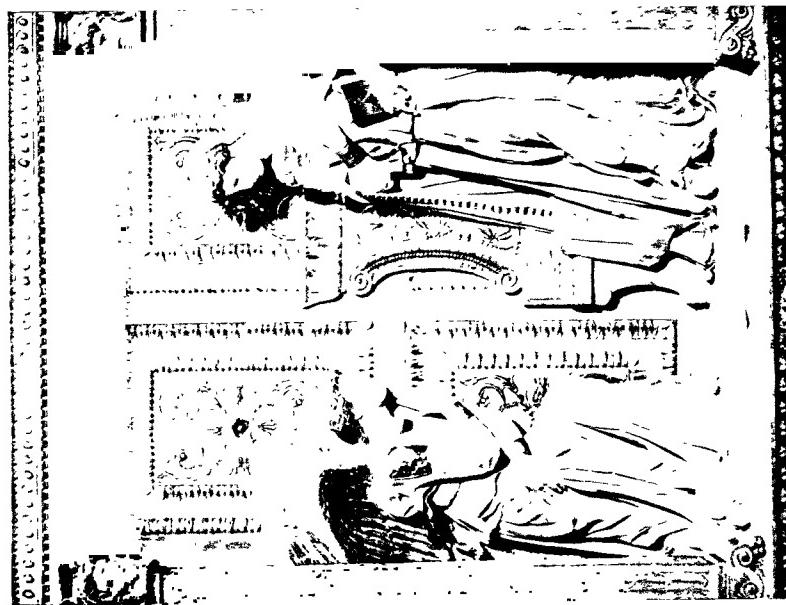


FIG. 77. ANSENCIANO, EARTH CO., PLATE A,  
FIG. 18.





and according to the distance between them the panel can be made short or long. Moreover either the Virgin or the Angel can be represented as kneeling, standing, or moving, and the dualism thus obtained offered considerable variety and many attractions for the sculptor. Similar to some extent is the grouping of the Visitation, which in the sympathetic hands of Luca della Robbia became one of the most striking monuments of the fifteenth century (fig. 77). On the whole the Italian sculptor was content with the obvious and more devotional incidents in the history of the Virgin: apocryphal events are almost wholly disregarded, and even when the Immaculate Conception became an authorised subject-matter, it was abroad that the artistic development took place; Puget's figure at Genoa is a favourable example of a difficult theme, and being the work of a foreigner it was not without influence upon his contemporaries (fig. 79). While France and Germany, more ambitious or perhaps less confident, multiplied and enlarged all kinds of legends connected with the Virgin, Italian sculpture can scarcely boast a Death of the Virgin executed on a large scale posterior to Orcagna's relief at Or San Michele, and this grand theme soon fell into desuetude. It was in connection with Christ at the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, and with similar scenes that the Virgin most frequently appeared in an historical character. Apart from their didactic value such events were

well fitted to plastic art, though, like so many Biblical episodes, they can only be rendered in bas-relief. As time went on these scenes became more and more complicated. The environment of the early Nativity suggests the birth of an ordinary child, while the three Kings who on the sarcophagi are simply dressed people making humble offerings of wreaths and doves, become more and more ceremonial; they are crowned, magnificently dressed, and attended by a numerous and well-groomed retinue.

CHRIST AS CHILD.—In these scenes the Christ is of course a child; but it was not until sculptors had overcome the purely technical difficulties of making a child look like a child, that events of this sort could be naturally undertaken. Romanesque sculpture could not grasp the sense of childhood, nor was there any love of its plastic charm. The Christ child is in reality a man.<sup>1</sup> The primitive tradition of Christ's youthfulness survived into the twelfth century; but it was a youth very different from the stunted and immature form entailed by this lack of modelling skill. The Christ of the earliest centuries might be an Apollo, a Krishna, an Orpheus, resembling perhaps most of all the Quattrocento idea of the Archangel. On the

<sup>1</sup> One may quote the Flight into Egypt and the Presentation in the Temple at the Parma Baptistery; the Manifestation of the Holy Child at Borgo San Donnino; the large Madonna and Child at San Giovanni Piacenza, and that at Ferrara, which bears the surprisingly late date of 1408.

THE MADONNA, FIGS. 78-82.  
To face p. 109.



FIG. 78. MADONNA, MICHAEL ANGELO, BRONZE.

*P. S. T. 1930*

FIG. 79. IMMATERIAL CONCEPTION, P. PUGET, G. NOV.



*P. S. T. 1930*



*P. S. T. 1930*

FIG. 80. MADONNA, SANZOINO, SANZOINO, VENICE.

*P. S. T. 1930*

FIG. 81. MADONNA, SANZOINO, VENICE.



FIG. 82  
MADONNA, DONATELLO, SIENA.



FIG. 81  
MADONNA, M. DONATELLO, LUCCA.

To live p-161

famous columns of the canopy of San Marco He is young and beardless throughout until the moment of His enthronement. As to the origin of the traditional appearance, it is now impossible to pronounce; certainly the controversy among patristic authorities was protracted and at one time animated. Tertullian and Cyril actually said that Christ's features were ugly, and perhaps they intended to suggest a mordant comparison between displeasing face and faultless character; but artists did not hesitate to strive after a type in which the virtues of Christianity could be most fully embodied. Having once determined upon a general structure of the face (a type which, on the whole, conforms to the most primitive records), they evolved a figure which is unmistakable.<sup>1</sup>

**CHRIST AS MAN.**—The actual physiognomy must vary in relation to the event—from the Man of Sorrows to the Ecce Homo, from the painful intensities of the Passion to the less tragic scenes from the daily task of ministry; but the accepted features were fitted in a unique and almost superhuman degree to the immense range of emotions they were called upon to express. And the sculptor did not shrink from those scenes which would test his capacity to the utmost,

<sup>1</sup> In the *Paradiso* (xxxi. 85) St. Bernard urges Dante to gaze upon the visage of the Virgin, as her resemblance to Christ will best dispose him to see the Saviour Himself. Michael Angelo seems to have held the traditional likeness before his mind in the Pietà at St. Peter's, and in the marble Madonna at Bruges (fig. 78).

namely the cardinal events connected with the Passion. Some of them, such as the Last Supper, though crucial from the doctrinal side, were ill suited to plastic art. A scene which not only is impossible except as a bas-relief, and which moreover exacts a formal disposition of half a dozen seated figures on either side of one dominant personality, with a long table cutting the foreground in two, such a scene offers small inducement to the sculptor. The gaunt and forbidding relief at Modena (fig. 2) is a poor thing in itself, but later artists were never able to make a fundamental departure from this rigid disposition. The faces of the Disciples could be vitalised ; the majestic calm of the Saviour might be profoundly rendered ; Judas might also be treated as a type of treachery or vindictiveness<sup>1</sup> : but the sculptor,

<sup>1</sup> His history began with avarice and deception, and ended with treachery and suicide ; so his face was made to embody cruelty, but more often furtiveness. The bad qualities of the traitor, the pagan, or the agent of martyrdom were frequently expressed by facial ugliness, and devout people used to vent their wrath and take their revenge by vindictively slashing the faces of Judas or the devil, and many Siennese paintings have been largely wrecked in this manner. More serious to art was the political vindictiveness which brought about the destruction of secular monuments. The statues of Julius II. at Bologna, of Paul IV. at Rome, of Adrian VI. at Florence, and of Paul II. at Perugia, were all sacrificed to political animosity, and likewise, though for better reasons, the monument of Doge Faliero at Venice. It was small compensation that statues commemorating abortive conspiracies should have been erected ; those placed at Florence and Assisi to record the Pazzi plot were only made of wax. This barbarous custom dating from the Empire was patronised by so enlightened a man as Pius II., who in 1462 ordered effigies of Sigismondo Malatesta to be burned in front of St. Peter's.

unlike the painter, could not escape from a stiff and almost mechanical distribution—hence the rarity of the Cenacolo. On the other hand certain motives which seem to have a natural bias to plastic treatment were still more rare. Christ and the woman of Samaria, Christ among the Doctors, or the washing of the Disciples' feet (happily employed on the great Lavabo at Pavia) should have suggested themselves to the sculptor, and indeed would have done so, had not the ambition of the artist as well as the preference of his patron directed men's thoughts most of all towards the Passion, and above all to the scenes of the Crucifixion.

THE CRUCIFIXION.—It was not until the seventh or eighth century that the symbolical ideograph was replaced by an actual crucifix, and even then there was no attempt to indicate suffering or death. The Crucifixion was too sacred and too momentous an event to be associated with the physical pain undergone by the two thieves : as late as Benedetto Antelami, death, although imminent, has not arrived. His predecessors figured Christ erect on the cross with open eyes, and it should be added with each foot nailed separately to the cross.<sup>1</sup> Gradually the head drooped downwards ; there was a progression from calm to

<sup>1</sup> Typical examples will be found in Milan Cathedral (coloured), in the Arezzo Museum (marble), and in the Cathedral at Bassano (wood). Many panel pictures and a few mosaics survive, nearly all based on the same interpretation ; the later example at Perugia (Pinacoteca), being dated 1272, is specially notable as giving a basis for comparison with contemporary sculpture.

discomfort, and then by successive stages to torture; and by 1400 one constantly sees the thieves, including Dismas to whom the doors of Paradise were opened, represented in hideous and distressing contortions. Perhaps the influence of the uncompromising friars may have contributed to this; they may have found it difficult to make their passionate appeals to a serene and placid Redeemer. In any case by the thirteenth century the mystic aspect of the Crucifixion had become inadequate. Aspects of its more human side and historical incidents made their appearance; so also scenes of torture and persecution, ugly crimes committed under Diocletian, together with the more unsavoury episodes of martyrdom, came into vogue, and the more remote the chance of their recurrence the more popular they became. Nothing could be less edifying than the conversion of so splendid an edifice as Santo Stefano Rotondo at Rome into a common charnel-house. With regard to the Crucifixion such vagaries were not only out of place but were sternly repressed. It is a theme in which a special measure of reserve is required, for not only must exaggeration give offence, but a face of petrified anguish, especially one which must be isolated, is in itself distracting. Italian sculptors, apart from their reverend demeanour, were far too shrewd to fall into such errors of judgment; and if Spanish art had undergone an evolution equally slow and protracted, it would have avoided many





FIG. 83.

CHRIST ON THE CROSS, DONATELLO, PADUA.

[To face p. 125.]

scenes of harshness and violence which are reprehensible in all connections, but which in the Crucifixion are unpardonable. It is needless to specify dignified or impressive examples among Italian sculpture: Donatello's is perhaps that in which the essential elements of the dead and dying Christ are combined with the deepest pathos and respect (fig. 83).

PROPHET, MARTYR, AND APOSTLE.—Further incidents drawn from the Passion, such as the Entombment, the Ecce Homo, and the Flagellation, were unknown to primitive art; and had it not been for the employment of the Stations of the Cross some of them would probably have been largely left in abeyance, for the average altar-piece, pulpit, or façade, was more properly furnished by less involved compositions. Perhaps also the indeterminate personalities of prophet, martyr, and apostle, may have suggested greater freedom of invention, and it was only in rare cases that an accepted type was evolved. The Apostles, for instance, apart from St. Peter and St. John, are such vague entities in plastic art that scrolls or emblems are imperative for their identification; there is a monotony in many scenes where they appear together, and in one sense it was almost preferable to treat them symbolically—by means of emblems, as on the early bas-relief at San Marco (fig. 15).<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Its chief significance lies in the complete negation of personalities. The flock of sheep represents the disciples, while the empty throne and

Evangelists had their own emblematic forms—eagle, angel, ox, and lion—which in the eleventh and twelfth centuries were occasionally unified into a tetramorphic symbol not far removed from a grotesque. On the whole the Evangelists were not very popular among sculptors, least of all St. Matthew; and the frequency with which their symbols are found indicates a reluctance to personate the actual men. The Fathers of the Church, though unconnected with the Biblical narrative, were at times associated with scriptural events as spectators and witnesses. It was the incisive personalities of the Old Testament prophets which appealed more directly to sculptors: their vigorous prose and the dramatic incidents in their careers encouraged the artist to visualise their outward forms, while the idea of intercession explains the presence of the donor and his family kneeling before the Madonna. It was the spirit of prophecy and its interpretation which justified such anachronisms as the presence of St. Francis or Ezekiel at a New Testament incident. Like the philosophers in classical art, the prophets who pondered on the past and predicted the future (themselves often enough types of the great events which they foretold) may be said

the emblems of Christianity indicate the hidden presence of the Saviour. Modelling, carving, and perspective are absent—indeed one almost feels that this ideograph is the impression of a coarse wood block rather than a sculptured relief; yet the interest is unmistakable, and it teaches a lesson which far more eloquent versions fail to enforce.

to have enjoyed a certain catholicity, and the sculptor saw them as men of his own day; thus Donatello's Habakkuk is a magnificent head—one of those profound studies of Quattrocento sternness and determination, not untempered by a glance of compassion and kindness. It was during the fifteenth century that the finest specimens were produced, and it may be remarked that the prophet as such was generalised and but seldom reduced to a specific type; even Mantegazza, who showed little inventive power, made some reliefs on the Certosa façade which are in every way worthy forerunners of Michael Angelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. Bernini's good sense deserted him when handling this theme; putting aside questions of technical skill, his two prophets in the Chigi Chapel of Santa Maria del Popolo are most disappointing. Donatello's Habakkuk is grave and sincere; his prophecy lies in the tortured brow and moving lips. In Bernini's version we are distracted by an angel, a deft, sprightly little personage who is impertinently tweaking the prophet's hair—an inapt stimulus to those gloomy vaticinations. The Daniel is less far-fetched, but he also is remote from one's idea of the fanatic who did not shrink from the lions' den; so also Lorenzotto's Jonas (in the same chapel), in itself a fine thing with a splendid silhouette of the *torso*, is pure irrelevance, where the whole drama of the situation is lost: but there are so many successes that it

is needless to insist upon the failures. The patron saint and the martyr provided sculptors with a wider field and a more extended choice : isolated or in combination, they are inevitable in all plastic schemes of decoration ; thus in a Franciscan church such as Santa Croce at Florence, one may expect to find St. John the Baptist as tutelary patron of the Baptistry, St. Clare as a prominent member of the order, and the Virgin as patron saint of the city.<sup>1</sup> The selection of martyrs was more capricious, though local connections always found a response ; moreover the martyr, who represented heroic endurance and whose death provided a concrete example of bravery, was the object of special religious cult, shrines

<sup>1</sup> Every town like every church had its special saint : it is curious to note how slight a relation St. Francis bears to the art of Assisi outside the Friars' great pile of buildings. In Genoa there is St. George, at Arezzo the Madonna della Misericordia ; St. Mark is more than the ordinary patron saint of Venice ; while Sant'Antonio of Padua, San Bernardino of Siena, St. Januarius at Naples, and many similar associations connote local preferences. From a secular point of view the Medici, the Scaligers, and the Visconti impressed their artistic personalities upon Florence, Verona, and the Certosa of Pavia. Similarly one finds particular places specialising in some branch of art, Padua for instance in small bronzes ; Mantua was the home of the medallist, and there is a particular distinction in the doorways, mantelpieces, and ceilings of Urbino. Venice again gloried in her magnificence, Florence in her combination of devotional thought with humanistic research, while Milan was a centre of classical activity. The bewildering variety of climate, race, material, and character, the changing ambitions and the indomitable enterprise of craftsmen, endowed Italian art with a complexity which is unique, and with an inexhaustible supply of local preferences and specialism which helped to preserve independence and self-reliance, long after the main lessons of sculpture had been nationalised.





FIG. 84  
PIRELLA  
PIRELLA, SANSONVINO, VENEZIA.  
Foto face D. Tocca



FIG. 85  
PIRELLA  
PIRELLA, A. DI BRUCIO, PIEMONTE.  
Foto face D. Tocca

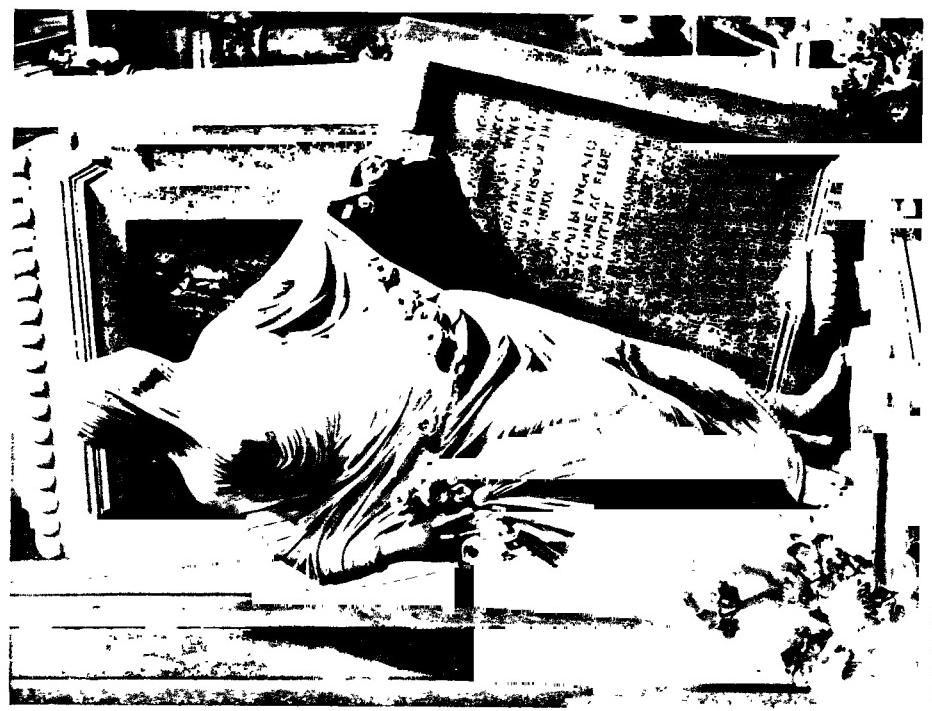


FIG. 86  
PIRELLA  
PIRELLA, CORRADINI, NAPOLI.  
Foto face D. Tocca

and reliquaries becoming the popular centres of pilgrimage.

ALLEGORY AND PARAPHRASE.—As time went on, apart from the tendency to illustrate the punishment of the damned and the throes of martyrdom, in contradistinction to the early Christian sentiment which preferred the joys of salvation, there arose an unmistakable tendency to concentrate on the New Testament and particularly upon Christian events of later centuries. The primitive concordance of the old and new dispensations, their contrast of type with prototype, so marked a feature in the early ivories and bronze doors, did not survive very long, the Old Testament being historical and the New Testament partaking more freely of mystic interpretation. Though Italian sculptors were less addicted to mysticism than the artists of Bavaria or Burgundy, they realised all its potency, and while sparing in its employment were ready to call it to their help; but it should be observed that, except in stated themes, Italian sculpture is shy of emotionalism—too dogmatic perhaps to foster the temperament which in itself predisposed the artist towards mystic or allegorical interpretations. Mysticism after all is not a quality to be acquired by research or diligence, being rather the reflected spirit of quietism or introspection, which coloured the daily work of some craftsman by pervading his daily life. None the less its embodiment went through a series of phases, and passed through a process

of evolution as distinctly as did the more material aspects of plastic art. The primitive symbol developed into allegory, which in turn became a paraphrase or enhancement, and which finally coalesced with other human sentiments into a vague and perhaps nebulous *θeos*, which for want of more precise definition is called mysticism. In the Catacombs the symbol is universal. It represents, from motives of reverence or precaution, that which was too sacred for concrete form. The Cross, the Palm Tree, or the Lamb appears on every sarcophagus—ideographs which were at the same time so simple and so comprehensive that they can equally convey a concrete fact or a composite belief. The hand appearing from the clouds is still used to suggest God the Father in pictures of the Baptism of Christ ; it likewise indicated the source of inspiration upon the portraits of Evangelists prefixed to their Gospels, and frequently enough it denotes Divine sanction on representations of royal coronations. The Dove again has always been the accepted symbol of the Third Person of the Trinity, and still remains so. The symbol as such admits of no development ; it can never be forced or expanded. These cryptic signs, meaningless to the uninitiated, doubtless incited to piety by recalling great events or profound doctrines ; but the artist could get but little satisfaction from a series of mnemonics which permitted little embellishment and no variation. The edict issued in 860 by the Council of





FIG. 27.

FURIA ADDORMENTATA, ROME.

To face p. 171.

Constantinople directing that symbolism should be replaced by reality, though its immediate influence upon Western art was small, gave the imprimatur to a welcome change by which the artist could vitalise his symbols and actually transform ciphers into allegories. It was the painter who chiefly profited by this expansion, for Italian sculptors never required so many symbolical attributes as were necessary for the recognition of the numberless phases of classical mythology, while the limitations of their material forbade anything on a scale comparable with the pictorial allegories. Fresco was the natural medium of allegory, and the fourteenth century its period of excellence. Throughout Tuscany and Umbria one finds these sermons and homilies, lay as well as religious, set out with profuse detail and on a gigantic scale, where painters with the help of scrolls and explanatory legends propounded all their convictions on civil or ecclesiastical government. Their influence upon pictorial art was good, for although at times it encouraged discursiveness, it helped to break down the tradition which had largely confined pictures to triptycal or poliptycal frameworks, while compelling the painter to formulate abstract types and to embody the personalities of his pageant.

MYSTICISM.—The province of the sculptor was less ambitious. For him allegory played a secondary part, and it was not until the fifteenth century (when allegory developed into

paraphrase) that this aspect of symbolism became of paramount importance.<sup>1</sup> Yet the definition of these movements must be empiric. Broadly speaking one may say that the fourteenth century is the age of allegory, the fifteenth of paraphrase, the sixteenth (paradoxical as it may sound) of

<sup>1</sup> SYMBOLISMS.—This statement should perhaps be qualified, since of course from early times certain types have been accepted as symbolising particular virtues or vices. Similarly the Signs of the Zodiac, Bestiaries, the emblems of the months and seasons, the Trivium and the Quadrivium (respectively the three and the four great subjects which formed the basis of mediæval learning), and kindred personifications of art, science, history, or valour, received generally recognised forms, which were indefinitely repeated in plastic art. But all alike are distinct from that offshoot of allegory here called the paraphrase, where instead of the emblem a wholly distinct personality acts an arbitrary part—for instance, where Rome is replaced by Minerva on the tomb of Gregory XI. (1378), or where Theology on the tomb of Sixtus IV. (1493) is a Diana with her quiver full of arrows. The classical tastes of the Quattrocento partly account for such a metamorphosis, but it is still more justly explained by the technical progress of sculpture, which with the growing scale of its monuments came to require a proportionate increase in the accessory figures, and chose them for their decorative value rather than from a strict sense of congruity. The arbitrary employment of angels was, however, never irrelevant. It must be remembered that they are able to protect and to punish, to slay, to console, and to teach; with the outward form of mankind they eat, drink, and partake of certain human qualities, and the appreciation of their value in art as well as in doctrine is shown by the formal reception of the Sibyls, their classical prototypes, into the Christian cosmogony. Their popularity as enhancements of plastic and pictorial art was widespread, and some men such as Amadeo and Matteo Civitale made them the ruling motive in many of their bas-reliefs. It seldom occurs that an angel is superfluous, and their perennial youth often provides an effective contrast to other figures with which they are associated. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries they are called upon to fulfil a definite function in drawing aside the curtain which conceals the recumbent figure of the deceased.

mysticism, while its development into romanticism is rooted in the seventeenth century. Schools and periods overlap in matters of temperament. Agostino di Duccio is not only the most sentimental sculptor of the Quattrocento, but perhaps of the whole *bella epoca* of Italian art. He is an isolated figure among sculptors, a man whose output, considering his facility for working in clay, stone, and marble, was small, while several of his most important works, notably the Maesta della Volta and the huge altar-piece in San Domenico at Perugia, are mutilated almost beyond recognition. None the less there is a consistency in his whole career, from the early reliefs at Modena to his latest works in Umbria, where his faults are frankly unconcealed: here and there a sexlessness which is almost Hellenic, and at times also a geometrical swirl of drapery which nowadays would be stigmatised as *art nouveau* (fig. 85). His anatomical ideas were somewhat crude, though in this connection such a shortcoming need not be considered, since the mystical elements in art can flourish irrespective of technical skill. The half-closed eyes in the gaunt altar-pieces of the early Tuscan school undoubtedly suggest a mystic environment, and Agostino likewise manages (consciously or subconsciously) to convey some hypnotic magnetism. He moves in a land of dreams: even in the vivacious reliefs of the Tempio Isotta at Rimini, where childhood is

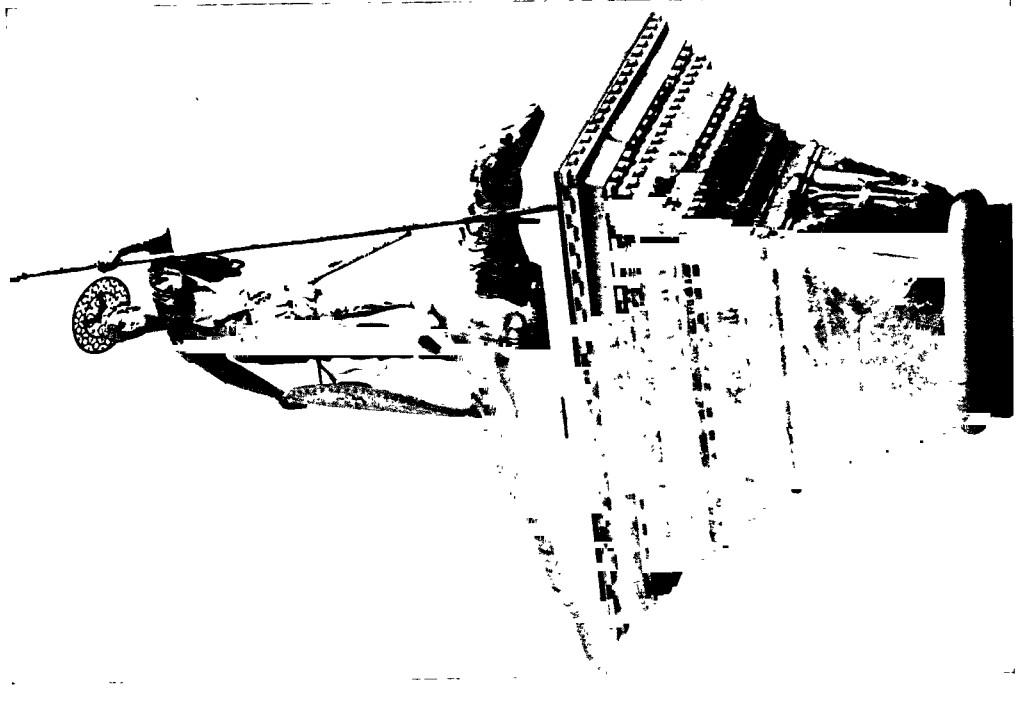
arrayed with an exuberance unparalleled in the whole range of Italian art, one feels apt to wonder if Agostino and his scholars were not trying all the time to make the spectator ponder upon that which is not indicated upon the surface. While the Greeks modelled in the light of day and the Gothic Northerners in shadow, Agostino di Duccio more than any of his Renaissance contemporaries saw the world in an intellectual chiaroscuro. There was something dim in the tragic scenes conceived by the sculptors of Padua; the miracle plays of Guido Mazzoni actually rely upon artifices and tricks of lighting; but Agostino keeps one's interest aroused by holding something in reserve, by telling only half his story, like the Egyptian Sphinx, or the last line of Dante's dialogue with Paolo and Francesca—the classic combination of mystery and tact. So it comes about that Agostino di Duccio, who at his best was but an indifferent craftsman, sets his harmony to a minor key, and succeeds by means of reticence to convey the reluctancies of Riemenschneider or the careworn Botticelli, as well as the nostalgia of Watteau, the painter who never saw Italy but who intuitively realised the haunting colouring of Venetian life. Whether Agostino deliberately contrived this end may well be contested: in any case it was seldom that he undertook scenes which suggest mysticism by the use of symbolism entailing any obscurity of meaning; nor indeed are such events as

ecstasies and visions, the Marriage of St. Catherine, the emblems of the Passion, or Christ displaying His wounds, so frequently found in sculpture as in painting.

MICHAEL ANGELO AS MYSTIC.—Marble was less fitted than canvas to events which partake of the supernatural, and yet it must be acknowledged that Michael Angelo is more mystic in his sculpture than in his paintings. In his Last Judgment there is a sense of violence in the Christ, something almost mundane in the expression of annoyance; and it was this kind of figure which led Raphael Mengs, no mean critic, to say that Michael Angelo was vulgar.<sup>1</sup> His taciturn and mystic temperament displays itself in the more plastic episodes of the Sistine Chapel, in the Sibyls, Prophets, and Athletes, who are treated from an architectonic point of view almost like pictorial caryatides. In sculpture proper Michael Angelo was far more ready to give play to the real bent of his mind. His tombs are emblematic: we can say no more. Whether the Laurentian Chapel embodies his reflections on the flight of time or the changing seasons, on the moods of mankind or the fickleness of Princes, it is impossible to say: perhaps in these problems, which scarcely admit of analysis and which defy definition, one may say that they best represent the mental attitude of a Quietist. But in any case we can trace the influence of form

<sup>1</sup> London edition, 1796, i. 149.

on mystic environment. The whole conception of Michael Angelo is monolithic. The centre of gravity is hidden. His figures are vast and aloof. To him everything was pregnant of some undefined prodigy; and since his statues are brooding—detached from the outer world, making no appeal to the spectator, and inviting no confidences or sympathy—he was able to concentrate their sentiment, making them like unto himself—absorbed, introspective, and mystic.



S. T. SUDOKI, PAVEL LIAV, VLN[1].

To face p. 176



FIG. 80. S. G. GORE, BONNIE, MORNIE, FIGURE.

1



FIG. 88. Schematic diagram of the proposed I.



## CHAPTER VI

### PLASTIC EMBODIMENTS OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

THE ALTAR.—The plastic embodiments of the religious thought which so largely governed Italian art, centre round the altar, shrine, church door, pulpit, and the tomb. These were the external forms to which sculpture applied itself, apart from isolated figures of veneration, such as the Madonna or the Crucifix, and also putting aside collective sculpture as displayed on the church façade. Of these varied forms, the altar alone was essential to the church, while the tomb was the only form which was of necessity personal. The altar, moreover, is a common asset of most religions, and classical tradition went far to determine its application to Christianity. The altar was the central feature of the church, the scene of the most solemn incidents of worship, and it was less important from an artistic than from the doctrinal point of view: its development throws little light upon the progress of the sculpture with which it was decorated. The early altar, consisting of a simple slab of stone, a relief not unlike the altars of pagan Rome, soon gave way

to a more complicated treatment responding to the enlargement and enrichment of the church itself. The usual position, as one sees it in lateral or apsidal chapels, was against the wall, and offered very little scope to sculpture, painting being the chief feature in the great majority of cases. The High Altar, on the other hand—the free-standing altar so to speak—usually demands some measure of plastic adornment. The earliest, and in a sense the most grandiose type, of which many examples survive (notably at Sant'Ambrogio Milan, at Perugia, Ravenna, San Marco, etc.), consists of a lofty *baldacchino* supported by upright pillars. Even in the hands of Bernini an ostentatious opulence could not deprive the great altar of St. Peter's of a massive and dignified unity. Moreover, the structural design being at once simple and restrained, it minimised the circumstance of flowers, linen, candles, and all kinds of embellishments, which are usually a distracting element in the high altar. After all, even when designed so as to be seen from the choir as well as from transept and nave, the altar must have a back, a less tidy aspect, and plastic art was never left quite alone to play its full part, or free to do itself full justice.

THE SHRINE.—The shrine, on the other hand, though in primitive times incorporated with the altar itself, was not subject to the daily changes of liturgical requirements. Being centres of prayer and intercession, and above all owing to the

pilgrimages and processions which they invited, popular shrines had to be accessible to crowds of worshippers, and are very frequently detached and free-standing. Sculptors enjoyed perfect freedom. Originally some small though precious relic was preserved in a jewelled casket ; gradually with increasing age its efficacy became enhanced, and one can trace a steady tendency to enlarge these religious reliquaries until they became huge structures in themselves, while spacious churches at Lucca, Loretto, and Assisi were erected to house objects of special veneration. The bulk of the great shrines are primarily sepulchral, and conform in a general sense to the shape of a coffin ; in and around Pavia there is a marked analogy between shrines and ordinary tombs of personages of saintly character, who none the less were not accepted as canonised by the visitor from a foreign diocese. The authorised shrine such as that of San Domenico at Bologna, Orcagna's in Or San Michele, or Bernini's stupendous *cathedra* of St. Peter's at Rome, was looked upon as a distinctive feature in the church, and in certain cases actually enjoyed a special ritual. Interesting as the subject is, it cannot be said that the shrine, as such, exercised any particular influence upon the progress of sculpture, as it merely reflects the tendency of the day, not always in a becoming fashion, for many of the most famous *arce* are composed of sculpture which is essentially small in conception and calibre.

The multiplication of incident and personnel became an end in itself, and the farther south one goes the more noticeable is this taste for variety of tribute to the sacred relic ; in Calabria and Sicily the mass of decorated detail is almost Burmese in wealth.

THE DOOR.—On the other hand the church door, though the scale of applied sculpture was of necessity small, and although bas-relief was the only possible medium, brings us in contact with some of the most striking products of church art. The early church doors have already been noted in a different connection (see page 29) as having had a special function in preserving the use of bronze, a material by the way which is seldom employed for Italian shrines. The metal door, however, soon ceased to be a necessity, and from its bulk was an expensive luxury. Normally one finds wooden doors, which it may be noted are rarely looked upon as final ; at any rate one seldom sees carved woodwork showing the care and distinction to be found everywhere in Germany or Northern France, and still more rarely is well-hammered ironwork applied to them. Bronze gates marked the ultimate ambition of the artist, who in the first instance paid great attention to the door jambs and lintels, whether civil or religious—a practice highly developed in seaboard towns with specially narrow streets (Savona for instance), in consequence of which the façade of the house lay outside the vision of the foot passenger.

Admirable as many of the bronze doors are, their plastic limitations seem to have discouraged the artist even more than their cost. It is true that among Renaissance sculptors Luca della Robbia, Donatello, Andrea Pisano, and Ghiberti all made bronze doors. They avoided the small treatment of their themes. Where decadence set in—early with Filarete at St. Peter's, and two centuries later with Caccini at Pisa Cathedral—discordant themes and excessive adornment are blameworthy rather than the actual sculpture. The invariable motive of the bronze door is a group of symmetrical panels surrounded by less or more decorated borders: there is no alternative composition. Skill and discretion lie in the choice of subject and its subordination to the fact that it beautifies a door. The Rape of Europa upon the great gates of St. Peter's is incongruous, and therefore absurd; likewise the fanciful detail of bird, beast, and flower on the west doors of Pisa, though carried out with a loving daintiness in itself beyond all praise, is none the less out of place. The door is a protection against the Heretic of Milan or the populace at San Marco, against fire at Pisa and against the barbarian invaders of the South. The delicate bronze plaques upon the door of the Castello Nuovo at Naples were shattered by a sixteenth-century shot. Hence the really skilful bronze doors, apart from the early examples which in truth were never excelled, are those which are frankly meant to

open and shut, and which, being exposed to the air, are modelled with directness and simplicity, clear in composition and bold in outline. Ghiberti's gates on the Florentine Baptistery are the most famous in the world, owing some part of their reputation to a rather extravagant epigram. There are ten bas-reliefs, each a masterpiece. The projecting borders and cornices are contrived so as to harmonise perfectly with the flat surfaces; yet something more than sculpture is required to fulfil the task, for in these gates handle, bolt, and lock are concealed, and they do not look as if they were intended to be opened. Donatello's doors in San Lorenzo's, though insignificant in comparison with Ghiberti's, have an air of reality and seriousness which add to their sterling qualities. None the less it would be ungracious to insist unduly upon the utilitarian aspect of such things, especially as the Italians, at any rate in their sculpture, were foremost among the most practical craftsmen of their day.

THE PULPIT AND CANTORIA.—Another group of church structures for which the sculptor shared large responsibility consists of the pulpit, singing gallery, and font. Bas-relief or mosaic is inevitable, and in the case of the larger pulpits, further scope was given by the supports, which from the time of Niccolo Pisano were merged into caryatides or figure pieces. The pulpit, however, though a necessity, ranging in scale from the huge structure at Pisa which together with the

font occupies the whole baptistery, down to the tiny window-desks in conventional refectories, is the outcome of the religious revival in the thirteenth century. The early ambones, of which so many survive in Rome and Ravenna, are very small, and moreover were not destined for the primary object of preaching. With the influence of the friars the pulpit reached its apogee; in order to command a crowded congregation the pulpit was spacious, and the preacher could move from one corner to the other, the floor space in some of them amounting to forty square feet. These pulpits were very lofty, and no effort was made to hide the staircase, thus securing a dignified approach, the concealment of which makes so many Belgian pulpits resemble columns covered with excrescences of flamboyant decoration. The Italian, moreover, perhaps from knowledge of acoustic science, could generally avoid the disfigurement of sounding-boards. An isolated pulpit, standing between the arches of a broad nave, required a considered treatment, and it is remarkable how seldom there are signs of conflict between the sculptor and architect. Bas-relief is, of course, the staple of plastic decoration, and scenes from the Passion, or episodes of martyrology, provided the chief subject-matter. On the *Cantorie*, which were only adapted to the larger and more wealthy foundations—and being placed at a considerable height from the ground were ill-suited for reliefs of a detailed character—

scenes from the psalms of praise were usually depicted (figs. 53 and 54). Donatello and Luca della Robbia achieved equal success in their architectonic design and in the sculpture proper. However, the singing gallery and the pulpit, together with the font, which from the early practice of total immersion was designed on a grand scale, were essentially structural rather than plastic; sculpture could only play a secondary part, and it is in the tombs alone that sculpture found a complete and far-reaching opportunity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> INFLUENCE OF THE FAÇADE.—The sculptor's relation to the church façade was of course intimate, and many façades owe their reputation to the sculpture rather than to their own architectural lines. None the less the distribution of doors, windows, and *loggia*, which go to form the façade, largely governed the sculpture which was applied to the blank spaces; though, as in the case of shrines, the sculptor was not materially influenced by the environment of his work, while obliged to submit to such limitations as were usually imposed by the absence of free-standing statuary. None the less a real impetus to narrative bas-relief can be traced to the twelfth-century habit of surrounding the doorways with scriptural scenes; and the practice continued until the famous façade of Orvieto Cathedral, where the four broad spaces are devoted to the immense series of bas-reliefs composing the remarkable and justly famed *Biblia pauperum* in marble. The historical epitome of the patron saint became a commonplace, scrolls and explanatory texts being dispensed with according to the progress of the art. It may be presumed that in many cases the sculpture was a subsequent addition, for the frequent confusion with which it is disposed, disregarding symmetry and convenience alike, would lead one to think that an architect's advice was seldom invited; having completed the fabric, the incrustation of marbles or bas-reliefs would be transferred to other hands. Occasionally, indeed, one finds façades where the sculpture, or at any rate the plastic mind, has enjoyed complete liberty. The Misericordia at Arezzo, San Bernardino at Siena, the Certosa at Pavia, and the Capella Colleone at Bergamo, are conspicuous examples of plastic as opposed to architectonic in-

THE TOMB.—The importance of sepulchral art in the history of Italian sculpture cannot be overestimated. The tomb was essentially a personal affair, patron and artist alike being little hampered by hieratic or doctrinal control. Being personal the tomb was not carried about, and it was useless for adaptation for other purposes, exception being made for some of the early sarcophagi and for slab-plates which were occasionally used as palimpsests. From its weight, from being a fixture, and from being a memorial rather than an object of utility, it could generally escape the doom of enlargement or restoration which has entailed the destruction of numberless altars, pulpits, and shrines. It is usually local, reflects local traditions, and is made of local material; it is often signed (differing in this respect from the French practice), and moreover the epitaph supplies a date. Finally, the best sculptors of every period and school were employed in making tombs. Their numbers are gigantic.

There are few signs of tombs or memorials to the dead in the temples of Pompei. The magnates had mausolea of their own, while the smaller people

fluences. The windows are crowded out by carvings, or else completely suppressed. The invasion of the sculpture is overwhelming, and though one would not say that the results are necessarily displeasing, co-operation with the architect is advisable, and concurrent responsibility would have checked extravagance. The architect, on the other hand, was under no obligation to call sculpture to his help, and one of the most significant things about Fuga's masterly exterior of Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome is that he entirely dispensed with plastic adornment.

erected shrines or monuments along the streets. Subsequently during the epoch of the Catacombs, when outdoor monuments were practically impossible, the early Christians ceasing the practice of cremation, were perforce content with inscribed tablets, associating the dead with belief in the Resurrection, and erecting humble *ricordi* which combined cheapness with privacy from the persecutor. From the catacomb the tomb emerged into the portico and atrium of the upper church, thence to the choir, and ultimately to the sanctuary, each stage in the progress towards public recognition of the dead being marked by ever-growing magnificence of the tomb.

CLASSICAL TRADITIONS OF SEPULTURE.—The primitive idea of the Necropolis survived in the new style of Campo Santo, while the classical mausoleum of Hadrian was revived by Galla Placidia and Theodoric. Christianity, however, differed from Roman or Egyptian art, in preferring to adorn the actual tomb rather than in making vast structures to contain it. But classical influences governed early sculpture, and it was the common practice to use pagan sarcophagi for Christian burial. The supply was limited, and when it became necessary to make new models, during the time of Italy's most dire distress, the old type was adopted without demur. Among the numerous examples preserved in Rome there are few which are not mediocre both in theme and treatment; seldom is there any striving after

æsthetic effect, while their doctrinal lessons and aspirations are conveyed by means of parables. One particular sarcophagus should however be mentioned, as it differs so widely from the majority : this one (183a in the Museo Cristiano) shows the Good Shepherd repeated thrice on the front, while a vintage scene with children and birds among the bunches of grapes pervades the whole composition, and confers an impression of warmth and happiness almost unique at this period. The sarcophagi at Ravenna, though perhaps less stiff and didactic than the Roman group, are still preserved for the most part in their original homes : as things go they are small, yet the solemn rows of marble tombs which line the aisles of Sant' Apollinare in Classe, resembling somewhat the grim alley of mutilated sarcophagi in the Aliscamps at Arles, are almost majestic ; such is the impression left upon the mind by these monuments in spite of their similarity in form, material, and decoration ; but being grave and austere, they are imbued with permanent qualities so often lacking in the more ambitious memorials of later times. The whole of this group of marble sarcophagi, identified by monograms modelled upon Consular precedent, bears witness to the continuity of Roman traditions which survived until the days of Niccolo Pisano, and which, while influenced in turn by Oriental agencies, none the less retained national characteristics and laid the foundations of Italian sculpture.

THE COSMATI.—It is worth noting that the earliest school of sepulchral art is associated with Rome herself, the Cosmati being the only indigenous school which ever sprang from the Eternal City. The Cosmati seem to have been a family group of craftsmen of somewhat embarrassed genealogy. It may be asserted with confidence that they represent the outcome of the early schools of mosaicists, of the Roman adaptation of the Opus Alexandrinum long before borrowed from the East. Though this art was of old standing, the Cosmati specified and articulated the movement, and produced the first blossoming of the Roman Renaissance. This Neolatinism sprang up at a desolate moment in the history of the capital, when her churches were empty and her populace was dwindling away, when Rome was the scene of daily turbulence and revolution. The Cosmati were catholic in their tastes. They fought a battle with mosaics and reduced them to a subordinate sphere, or rather combined them with sculpture, architecture, and painting. Beginning roughly about 1150 the first Cosmati, whose theory of combined arts has given an accepted name to their generic style, set themselves to erect tombs, *baldacchini*, and altar-canopies; the early examples have largely perished, and specimens of their sculpture prior to 1250, though important considering the date, are unattractive compositions compared with those of the later periods. One may mention some of the

Cosmatesque tombs in Rome which best show the prevailing ideas<sup>1</sup>; the effigy of the deceased man is recumbent with folded hands, details of costume not being ignored, while angels stand at either end of the catafalque, and do not busy themselves unduly with the curtain—a motive which robs so many tombs of the sense of repose. Here the angels are, as a rule, contemplative or intercessory. The monument projects from the wall, being enframed by slender pillars supporting a high-pitched canopy, within which the Madonna is invariably depicted, occasionally in painting but more often in mosaic. The composition, often executed on a very considerable scale, presents a rich polychromatic appearance, as mosaic was lavished upon the architectural members, the dress, and heraldry, in fact wherever space could be suitably found: though treated as an accessory, mosaic remained one of their chief assets, distinguishing this from the other schools of sculpture which were beginning to prosper all over Italy. The Cosmatesque personality seems to have perished about the beginning of the Papal exile in France in 1305, but whether it was owing to the abandonment of Rome by the Papal court, whether they were merged in the general Gothic movement, or indeed whether the family died out with its skill

<sup>1</sup> Honorius IV. in Ara Celi 1287; Luca Savelli 1266, also in the Ara Celi, and notable for the florid Roman sarcophagus; Bishop Durante in the Minerva 1296, Cardinal Gonsalvo in Santa Maria Maggiore 1299, and Cardinal Aquasparta in the Ara Celi, about 1304.

and experience as did the della Robbias, we cannot tell. That the Cosmati were appreciated in their day is sufficiently proved by the documents—*in marmoris arte periti*, or *Doctissimi magistri*, as the contracts and their own signatures record. And their application of mosaic to pilaster and corbel was adopted all over Italy, though it was in Rome itself under Magister Paulus that the Cosmatesque ideas of polychromacy ultimately found their most skilful interpretation.

ARNOLFO DI CAMBIO.—Meanwhile, however, throughout the country there was an almost sudden revival of monumental sculpture applied to tombs, corresponding closely with the architectural Renaissance, as is natural enough when one recollects that Arnolfo di Cambio practised both arts. Arnolfo's tomb of Cardinal de Braye at Orvieto<sup>1</sup> marks a definitive epoch; in fact it may perhaps be considered the most decisive of the six dated masterpieces which exercised a fundamental influence upon the evolution of Italian art (fig. 91). The Cardinal died in 1280, that is to say a good many years before the chief works of the Cosmati were produced. The tomb was mutilated during reconstruction of the transept of San Domenico, but its broad lines and its structural character remain unimpaired. The scale is very large, the material em-

<sup>1</sup> It is in the Church of San Domenico: its authorship has, of course, been contested; but, compared with the æsthetic and historical value of the monument, the point is immaterial.

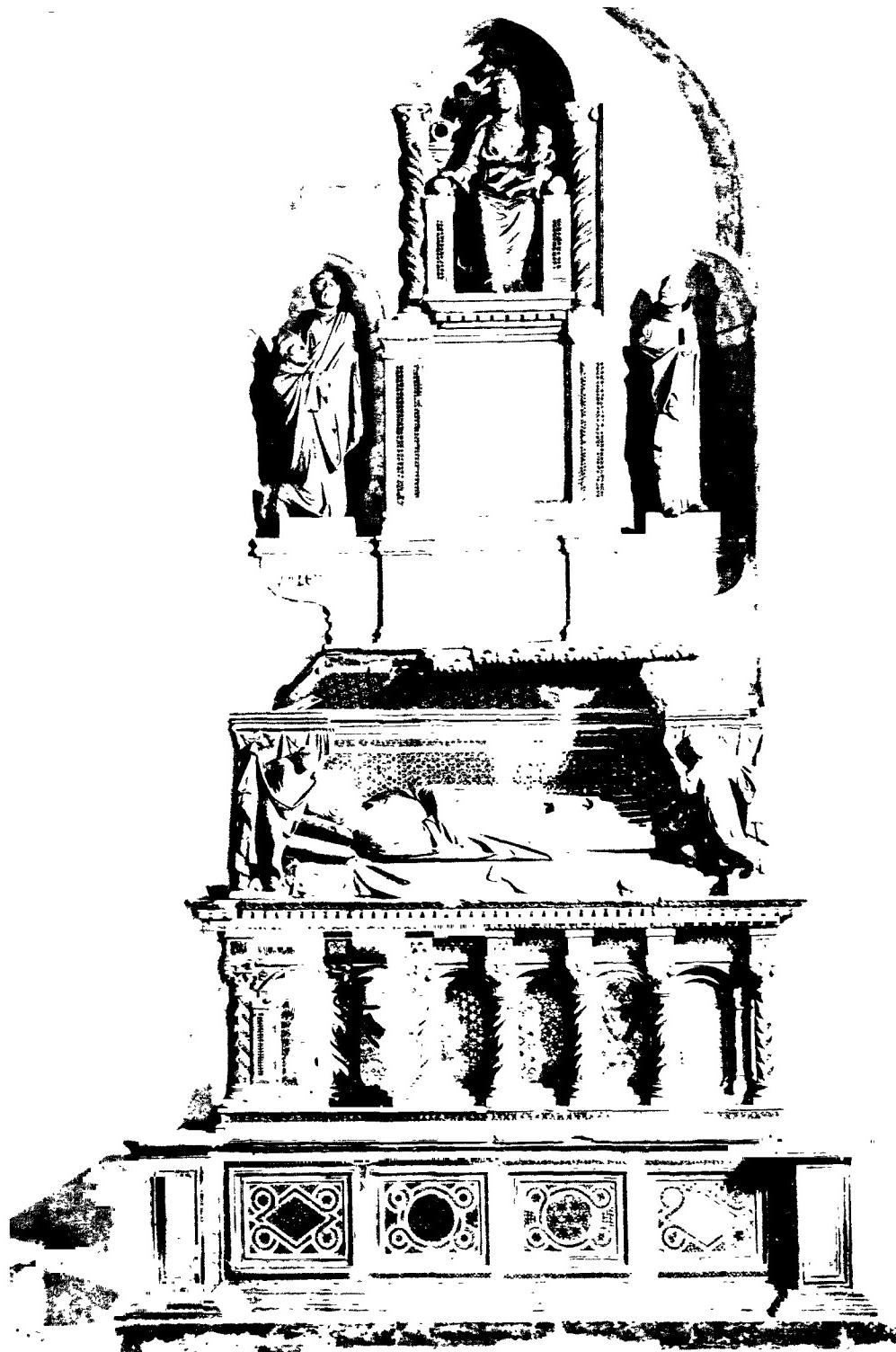


FIG. 91.

CARDINAL DE L'ISLE D'ESTE, ARNOTTO DI CAMIGLIO, ORVIETO.

(To face p. 100.)



ployed is sumptuous, and the architectonic arrangement in five storeys which coalesce, together with rich decorative qualities, combine to establish this monument as one of the models to which sculptors turned for a hundred and fifty years; and with modifications in Renaissance hands the exemplar survived still longer. The whole conception is devotional, there being no bas-relief or anecdotal panels. Occasionally there is an archaic stiffness—for instance in the rectilinear *Faltenwurf*, which is more suited to a standing than to a recumbent figure; moreover the upper portion including the statues is perhaps a trifle heavy and overcharged. When criticism is exhausted, this tomb stands out as the embodiment of everything which is most notable in thirteenth-century sculpture. The monuments at Bologna, Padua, Assisi, and Spoleto, the tomb of Cardinal Anchera in San Prassede at Rome with its odd caricature of Arnolfo's masterpiece, Gregory X. at Arezzo, and in fact all the important tombs of the period, offer but weak variations of this Cardinal de Braye.

GIOVANNI PISANO.—A specially deplorable loss is that of Giovanni Pisano's monument to the French Pope Urban IV. erected a few years later, and broken up during the enlargement of Perugia Cathedral in the sixteenth century. It would have been profitable to analyse the influence of Arnolfo upon Giovanni, who was the link between the thirteenth and fourteenth

centuries, and the intermediary between Niccolo Pisano and Orcagna. Giovanni's tomb of Benedict XI., erected soon after his death in 1304, is a notable monument, so admirably constructed that, were it reduced to a miniature scale, its great qualities would assert themselves.<sup>1</sup> Frankly modelled upon the De Braye as regards general structure, Giovanni has introduced certain personal touches: the recumbent figure is more naturally inclined, the little angels are much more human, and St. Dominic presenting the Pope to the Virgin Mary is less formal than the analogous scene in Arnolfo's monument. Altogether this is one of the very finest examples of the projecting niche tomb. The Scrovegni monument at Padua (1321), though of smaller interest, was none the less important as marking the importation of the later Pisan ideas to the North, and although there is no proof of Giovanni's having visited Venice, there are indications that his influence prevailed at any rate for a short time. But there is a striking paucity of fine tombs in Northern Italy during the fourteenth century, exception being made for the well-defined groups at Verona and at Milan, where nevertheless Balduccio's ambitious shrine of St. Peter Martyr in the Church of Sant' Eustorgio (fig. 14) produced little effect upon local sculpture. Such works as the monuments of Aliprandi (1344) and

<sup>1</sup> In San Domenico, Perugia. It was moved in 1700, and suffered considerably during the translation.

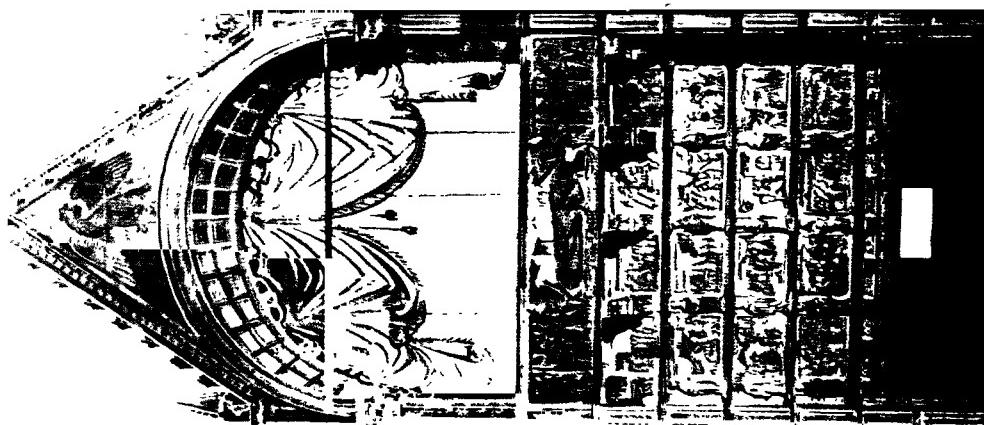


FIG. 92. *Fig. 92*  
BISHOP VARI VII, VIZZIO  
To face p. 192.

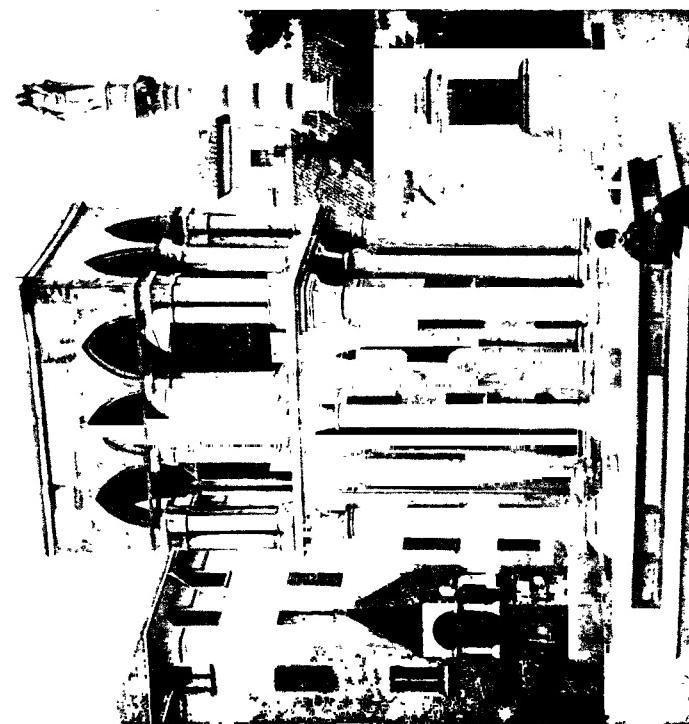


FIG. 93. *Fig. 93*  
PASSAGGI, BOLOGNA,  
To face p. 192.



Settala (1343), both in the Church of San Marco, leave no definite impression on the mind, though the latter has an interest as being one of the earliest examples of memorials to learned jurists and pedagogues which became so popular during the next hundred years.<sup>1</sup> Florence also, despite

<sup>1</sup> **TOMBS OF THE PEDAGOGUES.**—They mark the plastic tribute to the revival of learning—venerated grammarians delivering lectures to crowded and enthusiastic classes of students, many of whom in those days when youthful education was overlooked, being much older men than their teachers. This kind of memorial is essentially Italian, and its vogue was perhaps widest in Bologna, the home of solid logical and precise jurisprudence. Ethnographically their chief interest lies in the number of portraits, for it is obvious that many of the pupils actually sat for their likenesses; good types of head they are, somewhat rugged perhaps, but earnest and thoughtful people who so often look as though they were anxiously trying to regain lost time. In numbers the classes vary from six or eight in the Canonici monument at Bologna and Rossellino's Lazzeri at Perugia, to no less than sixty in the tomb of Medicina at Perugia (1449), which has a further interest attaching to its emblematic symbol of the apotheosis of scholarship. Then again these monuments are notable as containing the double image of the deceased, seated and recumbent. Two of the finest examples are in San Giacomo Maggiore at Bologna, the Fava and Bentivoglio tombs, of which the latter is an unquestioned masterpiece of Jacopo della Quercia. Seated figures on tombs are rare in Italy, common in France: the combination of the two postures is found, for instance, on the monument of Innocent VIII. in St. Peter's, but except in this group seldom. Still less common is the memorial on which the deceased only appears once, and then as a living man; the Orsi monument in Florence Cathedral is a case in point, and one sees the idea somewhat evasively applied in the Laurentian Chapel, while the practice was not unusual with those who erected the later Papal tombs. These jurists, however, were not only represented seated—to that they were entitled (like the Pope or prince) as a mark of intellectual sovereignty—but in many cases the tomb is wholly secular, or else the religious emblems are reduced to a minimum. This one sees on the famous tomb of Sinibaldi (fig. 94) by Cellino di Nese in Pistoja Cathedral (1339) one of the earliest examples of the pedagogue tomb,

her wealth and signal achievements in architecture, not only erected very few tombs during the Trecento, but largely depended upon the enterprise of Siennese artists. Their influence was considerable, and Florentine sculptors were much too ready to accept the anecdotal and spectacular aspects of the Siennese teaching. In fact it was not until the fourteenth century that Dante's gibe as to the vainness and frivolity of Siena could have been even partially applied: not indeed that one can justly allege such charges, though the fact remains that in 1350 Siennese art was essentially lymphatic compared with the earlier vigour of Duccio, or the subsequent virility of Giacomo della Quercia. The tomb of Bishop Tarlati in Arezzo Cathedral, erected in 1330 by Agostino and Agnolo of Siena, may be taken as a type of the school (fig. 93). It is not easy to recall a monument at once so large and so insignificant. It is ten yards high, the bas-relief covering nearly a hundred and seventy square feet, and the lower panels being separated laterally by fifteen episcopal figures of rare monotony. Beneath this chess-board there is a vague blank space, while above the recumbent figure there is a dreary waste of curtain and a good deal of very indifferent carving. The conception is weak. There are good scraps here and there, but as a whole

showing the professor as a gaunt and colossal personality towering above his attentive pupils. A whole volume could be suitably devoted to the description and illustration of these monuments.

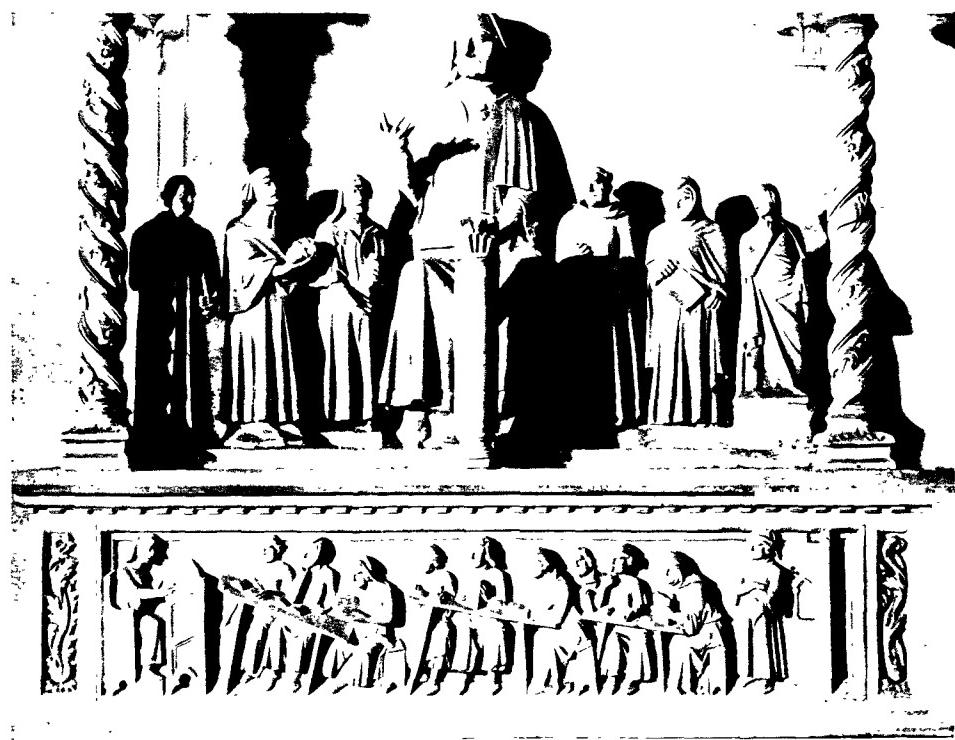


FIG. 94.

SINTRADE, CELLINO DI NESE - PISTOIA

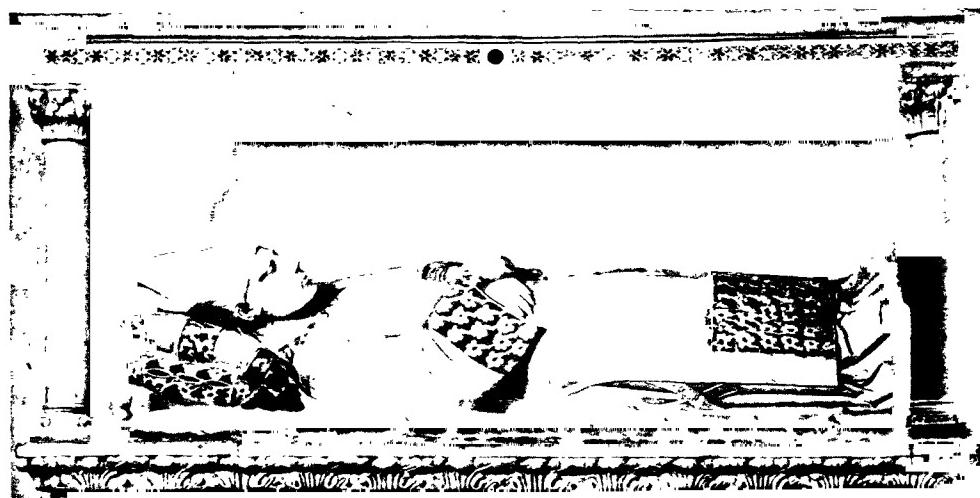


FIG. 95.

STEFANESCHI, ROME.

To face p. 194



the monument is a failure.<sup>1</sup> An even more conspicuous specimen of the *pizzicheria* of Siennese sculpture is presented by the neighbouring high altar, a good deal later in date. Here again the scale is big, and no doubt it is full of charming little bits of sculpture. Standing a few feet away one can find quaint conceits and prettinesses, but half-way down the nave the altar is amorphous and wholly without character, since the multiplication of "exquisite detail," front, back, and sides, has been carried out at the expense of permanent and fundamental elements.

GOTHIC TOMBS OF NAPLES.—Meanwhile a very vigorous school had sprung up in Naples largely under the auspices of Tino da Camaino, whose fine figure of Henry VII. at Pisa (1315, fig. 103) ranks among the most stately products of the early Trecento. Ten years later Tino migrated to Naples, where the Pisan cult for pulpits developed into a great *fabbrica* of tombs. Early Neapolitan sculpture scarcely survives, but one can still detect the ideas on to which Tino grafted

<sup>1</sup> It should, however, be stated that the monument had to be moved. The inscription says: "Guidonis Tarlati Aret antistitis—cenotaphium miro artificio structum—hominum magis quam temporis injuria—confactum—e sanctiore hujusce templi sacello—in hunc locum transferri—pristinæque formæ restitui curavit—Nicolaus Marcaccius episc. Aretinus—A.D. MDCCCLXXXIII." It will be observed that the tomb had to be removed, that it was much admired, but that human agencies were more blameworthy than the ravages of time; and finally, that it was restored according to approved methods. In carrying out this act of piety the good Bishop Marcacci allowed a strong metal bar supporting the monument, to be fixed into the adjacent fresco by Piero della Francesca.

a manual impetus. The development was rapid: not due to Southern enterprise, to the mythical Masucci to whom everything is locally attributed, for a Tuscan spirit stands out prominently—deflected it is true from its native reserve, and amplified by something more full-blooded and better suited to the Southern taste for emphasis and exaggeration. Monumental tombs are the ruling feature;—here memorials of the dead, elsewhere palaces for the living, Naples having only half a dozen houses fit for the nobleman of Genoa or Venice. On the other hand, though the churches are generally invisible, being covered externally with mean and squalid accretions, the number of private chapels of every size and shape is extraordinary. The Dynasty, and later on the Viceroy, annexed the choir or transept, while lateral chapels were the appanage of the dominant families, becoming in fact real property which was transferred like landed estate. Each generation added its quota of tombs, and we consequently find chapels even more crowded with statuary than the most congested corners of Westminster Abbey. One result was to reduce the space available for pictorial art—less suitable than marble for memorial purposes—and this was one of the causes contributory to the absence of any living school of fresco-painting in Naples. Being essentially chapels of the family, the tombs are those of laymen and of their wives who perpetuated the race. In Rome the recumbent effigies of the





FIG. 96. MARY OF ANJOU, NAPLES.



FIG. 97. BISHOP FEDERIGHI, LUCA DELLA ROBBIA, FLORENCE.

[To face p. 197.]

laymen armed *cap-à-pie* scarcely exist: one wonders where they are buried. Per contra it is difficult to find the tombs of the Neapolitan clergy. These lay tombs are consistent, and are notable for their lay accessories—virtues, arts and sciences, impersonal caryatides, officials of the court, and in a subordinate degree the Apostle or canonised saint. The virtues which in the middle of the fourteenth century formed the basal support of the monument, later on became armed warriors to personify the might and prowess of Divus Ladislas, small stress, however, being laid upon the conquests or political achievements of the deceased.<sup>1</sup> Thus the points of special note are first the lay character of the tombs, and secondly their frankly regal aspect: *ex monumentis testes excitamus*. Even the little Princess of Anjou, assuredly one of the most precious memorials of tenderness and pathos, is borne up to heaven across a broad field charged with her special mark of cadency, and semée with *fleur-de-lys* (fig. 96), for in Naples the King was

<sup>1</sup> These great tombs scattered all over Naples are noteworthy for their decorative treatment. Heraldry of course plays a leading part, and is handled with freedom, the *fleur-de-lys*, much employed in the Angevin tombs, never lacking a charm of its own. Stonework is richly carved, often with needless extravagance, though it must be acknowledged that the detail seldom mars and never breaks the big structural scheme. Mosaic is used sparingly, preference being given to marble and glass *intarsia* for embellishing the flat surfaces. Fresco is very rare indeed: the Neapolitan practice of blackening the flat planes of bas-relief is certainly effective, often giving lucidity and sometimes distinction to a second-class composition.

King, and did not call himself Doge or Podestà. Five generations of these astonishing tombs were erected, not the most pure and certainly not the most beautiful specimens of Gothic art ; but their confident address and their huge scale, some of them being forty and fifty feet high, make them the most grandiose productions of the period. Gothic art was imported into Naples : it became exotic and grew rank, and its evolution to florid and surcharged types was as startling as it was rapid. In Naples alone can the Baroque aspect of Italian Gothic be studied. But it must not be supposed that there was degeneration, still less a collapse. The sculptor-architect was grave and imposing to the end, and with the dawn of the Renaissance he gave way to the newer school of thought, which in its turn created monuments as important as those of its predecessor.

THE SCALIGER MONUMENTS.—It is at Verona that the most perfect group of Gothic tombs survives. They differ from those of Naples, being placed in the open air. Their general scheme is modelled upon the well-known tombs of Passaggeri (fig. 92) and Foscherari at Bologna, and the still earlier "tomb of Antenor" at Padua, namely a sarcophagus placed upon a broad slab of marble resting on tall pillars, above which is a pointed quadrangular canopy, upheld in turn by more pilasters. These particular monuments are to some extent sheltered from the weather, but there

are many inscriptions affixed to monuments inside churches which record their removal indoors owing to detrition by the rain.<sup>1</sup> At Verona the least noticeable feature of the tombs is the recumbent figure, and the most highly decorated portion is that which shelters the sarcophagus. The tiny churchyard or forecourt of Santa Maria Antica has been converted into the necropolis of the Della Scalas who ruled Verona from 1261. The overcrowded space is enclosed by an open grille which excludes the public without concealing what is within, and these memorials of monarchical splendour and force are part of the daily life of the city. In spite of freedom in detail and facility of execution, there is something pinched in the wiry Gothic of Northern Italy, a mixture of ideas and forms which, without deserving the term hybrid, none the less distinguishes the style from the rigid purism of Northern France. This is especially notable at Verona, and instructive also, because there is a complete sequence from the earliest monument, which is a stone coffin resting upon the pavement, to the pretentious catafalque of Can Signorio (1375). A close family resemblance runs throughout, and these groups of architectural statuary are so disposed as to make foils to each other; but

<sup>1</sup> For instance, the handsome tombs of Bartolomeo Caraffa and Riccardo Carraccioli, which were removed from the Priory garden of Santa Maria Aventina, Rome, in 1611 and 1617 respectively. The practice of housing outdoor monuments continues apace, from motives which can no longer be regarded as wholly disinterested.

notwithstanding the contrasts of style and date there is one ruling theme—the record of personal valour reflected in the battle-pieces, and of personal predilections shown by the talkative details and the nice choice of patron saints. As the dynasty went on and as its court became more renowned, the tomb of the deceased prince grew in importance, and there is a progressive scale of magnificence until we have a monument of such altitude that the equestrian statue, rising from a perfect forest of pinnacles, peeps into the third-floor windows of a neighbouring palace, and fairly dominates the *piazza* below. The most noble of all this group, among the most noble too of all its contemporaries, is Can Grande, a *condottiere* at heart, though the friend and defender of Dante. The frontispiece of this volume reproduces a supreme triumph of plastic art, one of the most striking portraits in the world.

FLORENTINE TOMBS OF THE QUATTROCENTO.—Centuries do not afford convenient standards of measurement for art movements, but the term Quattrocento at least indicates an art period which can be reckoned in years, although the ideas of the fourteenth century overlapped into the fifteenth, just as the fifteenth century trespassed intellectually upon the sixteenth. The Quattrocento does undoubtedly mark a specialised period, and its sentiment, its *spiritelus*, is perhaps reflected with greater lucidity in the tombs than elsewhere. The artist had finally passed from the tentative

stage : he retained what we call *naïveté*, and he was always ready to experiment in material, composition, and form ; but the half-apologetic tone so often encountered in the fourteenth century disappears early in the fifteenth, and the sculptor for the first time shows real confidence in himself and his technique. Much indeed remained to be learned, but such works as Donatello's bronze David (fig. 60), Luca della Robbia's tomb of Bishop Federighi (fig. 97), or Ghiberti's gates, prove how marvellously the purely mechanical craft of sculpture had advanced since 1350, while the prevailing qualities of these three achievements,—suppleness, ease of disposition, and mastery of casting,—justly inspired hope for the future. While the actual treatment of materials showed this progress, new ideas were also coming into vogue. Humanism in all its endless ramifications, extending from the modest desire to study old texts, or to unearth ancient documents, down to its final crop of absurdities, where the Abbess was painted as Diana, and when a handsome Pope nearly secured the official appellation of Formosus, humanism opened out a fresh vista of untrodden fields. But there was no break with the past ; no link was broken in the chain of evolution. The fifteenth century is a wholly logical, indeed the inevitable offspring of its predecessor, and if there are fundamental changes in outlook their causes were established long before ; just as the humanist movement itself, which brought them to maturity,

dates back to the thirteenth century, when the real revival of learning began under the great scholars of central Italy. The first striking fact in the development of the Quattrocento tomb is its appearance in Florence. Up till then, though rich, progressive, and competent, the Florentines neglected this source of distinction and mark of filial responsibility. Their city can boast no such group of monuments as commemorate the Visconti, the Della Scalas, or the Durazzi ; consequently we find but small traces of those ethnographic ideas so typical of the fourteenth century. Florence preferred to concentrate her best energies upon her Cathedral buildings and public works, and thus it comes about that, so far as sepulchral art is concerned, she begins with the philosophic period. Having already progressed far, she was able to gather all the threads into her hands, binding them into a powerful strand, and while preserving the individuality of her own artists as well as the distinctions between various schools of thought, she exercised a dominant control over the rest of Italy. As soon as Florence changed her methods, her sculptors who were scattered throughout the Peninsula quickly followed suit. The four characteristics which mark the century are successively the stern uncompromising directness of Donatello's Pope John XXIII. (1424), followed by the humanism and scholarship of Rossellino's Leonardo Bruni (1444) (fig. 98); twenty years later the monument of Bishop Salutati (fig. 45)

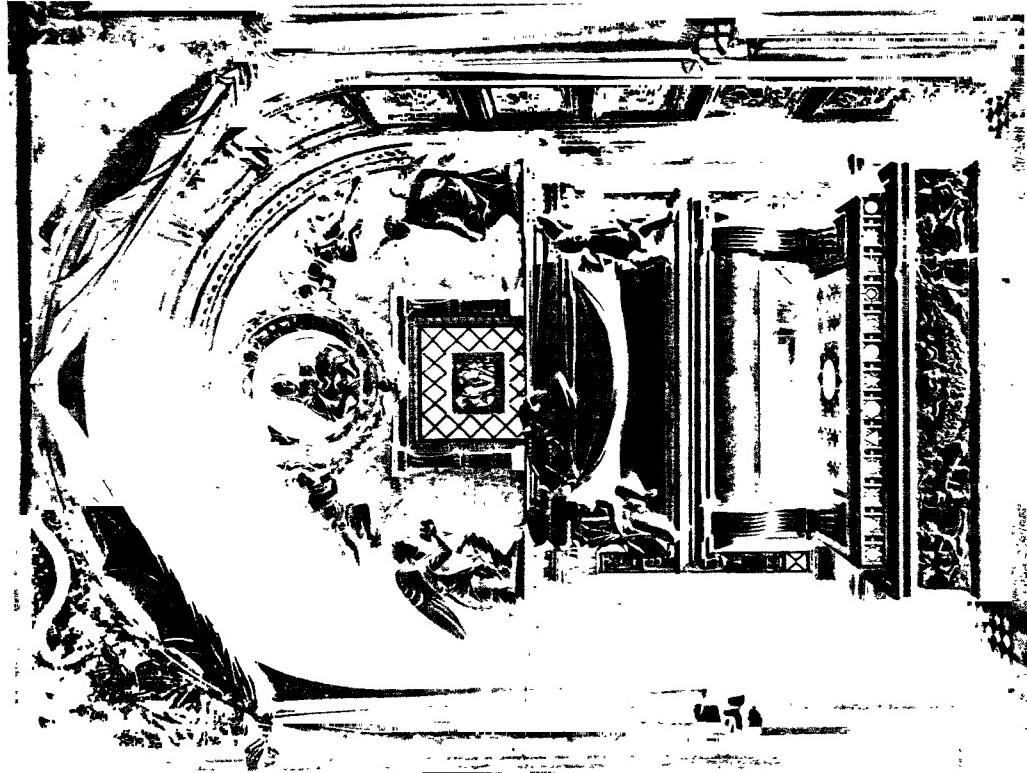
at Fiesole shows where the tenderness began which was to end in sentimentalism, and twenty years later again, in 1489, the tomb of Sixtus IV., with its studied exclusion of Christianity, made a far-reaching and momentous departure. Foreign ideas, especially those of Burgundy, began to influence Florence early in the century, and contributed a certain fulness, one might almost say an *embonpoint* which was far from unbecoming, for it was usually held within bounds by the Tuscan sense of space, by their tact in its distribution, and by a firm belief in the decorative value of undecorated surfaces. Even in the middle of the century, when detailed carving was really popular and when its treatment was distinguished by the highest qualities, there was always enough restraint to prevent the abuses which subsequently threatened to bring monumental sculpture into disrepute. Still more stringent was the self-imposed attitude of Donatello. One's first impression of his two great tombs, John XXIII. at Florence and Bishop Brancacci at Naples, is their bigness, not in scale, but in the breadth of composition and idea. The absence of parade carries with it a simplicity which in turn produces a calm unaffected dignity. There is something mature in these two monuments which makes one feel that all things have been considered and that little remains to be said. Brancacci indeed is a silent rebuke to the florescences with which he is surrounded. Michelozzo's tomb of Aragazzi breathes

the same atmosphere. It is now dispersed all over the Cathedral of Montepulciano : many parts being missing the unity is of course lost, in fact it is impossible to reconstruct the design.<sup>1</sup> A good deal of the work is quite indifferent, but the whole thing, although a second-class affair, is cast in a big mould, and notwithstanding its shortcomings is a sincere and effective monument. The Aragazzi tomb was erected about 1429: compared with that of Leonardo Bruni placed in Santa Croce only fifteen years afterwards (fig. 98), it is not only archaic but almost uncouth.

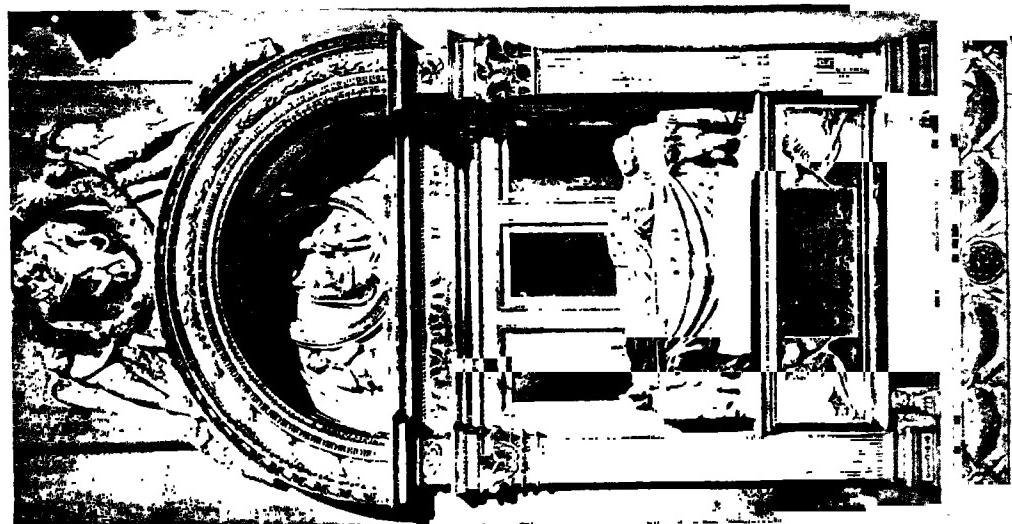
BERNARDO ROSELLINO.—Bernardo Rossellino heralds a new generation, actuated by fresh impulses and engaged with new allies. The Bruni tomb (finished, by the way, a few years after his countryman Giovanni Arnolfini commissioned Van Eyck to paint the famous double portrait now in London) marks a decisive step in the progress of humanism, as far as it can be reflected in plastic art. Volume is no longer a necessity for the tomb, and nothing robust, still less anything of a forbidding or minatory character, would be appropriate. The whole conception of funeral monuments became pictorial, plastic, architectural—a pleasant scheme of colour and design, executed it is true in sculpture as though accidentally, but dissociated from the sadder aspects of death which

<sup>1</sup> Among the most interesting of the recent acquisitions by the Victoria and Albert Museum is the pair of marble angels, presumably from the central portion of this monument.





Foto, op., CARDINAL OF PORTUGAL, V. ROSELLINO, FLORENCE. To last p. 203.



Foto, op., LEONARDO BRUNI, ROSELLINO, FLORENCE.

enveloped earlier monuments. The unwritten conditions of success as laid down by Rossellino were that generous warmth and affluence should be suggested by variegated marbles or *pietra dura*, that security of society should be indicated by a happy profusion of garlands, arabesques, and smiling children, while the keen and critical countenance of the statesman would adequately reflect the exact and inquiring minds then engaged in solving new problems of philosophy. This Bruni monument was not slow to impress its personality upon contemporary art. Desiderio da Settignano, not a copyist, made no effort to escape from its mastery, and the Marsuppini tomb in Santa Croce is in more senses than one a *pendant* to that of Bruni. Scores and hundreds of others were modelled upon the ruling exemplar: there were all kinds of modifications, which need not be specified, as they do no more than assert the prevailing fertility of technique and imagination. Antonio Rossellino's tomb of a Portuguese Cardinal in San Miniato should, however, be mentioned, owing to its structural importance. It is considered one of the most attractive of the whole group, and enjoys the initial advantage of being placed in a deep recess; at any rate the sculptor was able to take his choice. In deciding to place his tomb well within the niche, Rossellino was making an interior, and acted up to the convention by hanging a massive sweep of curtain, which would not merely shroud the cenotaph, but could

actually veil the whole composition. Altogether the scale is too large, and the delicacy of his style is lost in the over-ambitious *mise en scène*, for the angels are scattered, the spaces are too wide, and the background has lost touch with the sculptured portions. The Portogallo tomb marks the utmost development consistent with preserving the intimacy of the Bruni model; but it is a remarkable work, deservedly popular, and significant for something which is here treated as an elusive detail upon the lower frieze—a skull—the emblem of mortality which later on seized the weary imagination of the seventeenth century. The fundamental success of this tomb, the asset which makes one ignore its faults of construction, is the statuesque calm of the peaceful recumbent figure; one's attention is magnetised by this superb portrait, seemingly not idealised, for it has all the easy repose of innocent and childlike sleep. With due deference to the sacred scenes and attributes added to these memorials, it is not inapt to consider the effigy as the central theme. On the Ravenna sarcophagi one looks in vain for a portrait, and often enough the deceased is not even named; one is content with the mystic emblems of Christianity. Five hundred years later the Christian symbol becomes the Christian scene. Then the work as a whole, scene and symbol as well as its sepulchral aspect, invites attention. Lastly, in 1450, though we have all the earlier elements combined, our first thoughts

are for the figure of the dead man, for his character, likeness, and personality, or as much of it as the chisel could impart. Mino da Fiesole, though not an artist of the first rank, nor one of the men who quite show the signs of a solid education,<sup>1</sup> may be taken as a type of sculptor who by degrees, and unconsciously at first, made a point of softening down all asperities, physical as well as emotional. He was not the first to imbue his whole conception with gentleness. Paolo Romano's Stefaneschi monument, a work of great strength and becoming polychromacy (fig. 95), and Luca della Robbia's tomb of Bishop Federighi (fig. 97), are grand examples of the peaceful monuments erected by earlier generations. By 1480 the idea was carried a good deal further. The tomb became homely and domesticated, a personal and friendly reminiscence of the

<sup>1</sup> Mino, in fact, did some thoroughly bad work : witness his pulpit at Prato ; his four great reliefs at Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome are likewise disappointing. Though the carving is good, there is poverty, even slackness of invention. Whether Mino was making money or merely careless, or whether the atmosphere of Rome was enervating, we cannot say, but there is a laxity throughout. Thus, half the big panel of the Adoration of the Magi is occupied by three precisely similar squires leading three precisely identical horses, and the rest of the composition is sacrificed to the development of the theme, which is not treated with originality or skill. In the Assumption there is charm, but here again the mathematical duplication of angels almost suggests that they were cast from a reversed mould. In the Nativity Mino's Tuscan spirit reappears in the better composition, and there is a pleasant picture of the shepherds being aroused, one from his piping and the other from his *siesta*, and all around them the rocky landscape of the Mugello. But Rome never inspired Mino with new ideas, and it clouded his old brightness and vivacity.

deceased, often enough recording his characteristic tastes and occupations, but invariably avoiding undue mourning for his departure. And most truly could these later artists of the fifteenth century embody the security and maintenance of repose. In a plastic sense the Greeks were barely able to distinguish between sleep and death. The peacefulness of these monuments springs from their presentment of sleep, or rather of easy and almost aimless slumber. Sleep long continued to be the most welcome aspect of death ; but it soon became sham sleep, then restless sleep, lastly a nightmare where the effigy becomes a haunted figure springing up from the catafalque. How ill do such morbid and degenerate examples contrast with the figures here illustrated, from figures 101 to 106, examples drawn from Padua, Rome, Lucca, and Naples.<sup>1</sup> They show the sensitive nature of the Quattrocento, where the idea of deliverance and repose—*nunc altâ in pace quiescens*, as says the epitaph on the Baglioni tomb at Perugia—is handled with consummate delicacy and grace.

THE SLAB TOMB.—That the effigy should be presented in sleep, or perhaps in death, was of

<sup>1</sup> The effigies alone are reproduced, as the monuments add nothing to the knowledge of sculpture which cannot be derived from the Bruni and Portogallo tombs. No. 104 is Marcantonio Albertoni in Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome; No. 106 is Rossellino's Mary of Aragon in Mont' Oliveto, Naples; No. 101 is the Gattamelata in the Santo, Padua, not improbably executed by the artist responsible for No. 102, the very wonderful sarcophagus in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Matteo Civitale is the author of No. 105, the effigy of San Romano from the shrine at Lucca, 1490.

course incumbent upon those who made the sculptured slab tombs inserted into the church pavements. Originally no doubt these memorials merely consisted of the upper lid of the stone coffin, upon which the name of the deceased was engraved, and as time went on a greater measure of decoration would be applied. Primarily, therefore, they were not of an ornamental character, and it is significant to note that on the illustrated pavements of Siena Cathedral the most sacred scenes are absent, since it would have been unbecoming to walk across such representations. One can scarcely accept the pretty idea that humility suggested these slab tombs, for it is well established that at any rate in France it was customary to cover them with rich canopies on festivals and anniversaries, thus making it inapt to say, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust." Italy never developed this style of memorial; the brass with which one is familiar in England and Flanders does not even exist south of the Alps, and there is no example of those tombs which are common from Frankfort to Cracow, where, deserting modest incision and engraving, the sculptor has run riot in what amounts to high relief. Donatello's memorial of Bishop Pecci (1427) is the model of what this kind of memorial should be, while Ghini's bronze slab tomb of Martin V. in the Lateran has a special interest, as it is raised some twelve or fourteen inches from the ground. It represents the compromise between the slab and the free-standing tomb.

FREE-STANDING TOMBS.—If one regrets that slab tombs were but little cultivated in Italy, it is a matter of concern that free-standing monuments are so rare, there being scarcely twenty good examples of what is without question the most grave and solemn form of sepulchral art. The isolated tomb of course presents even greater difficulties than the free-standing statue, and the Italian theory was always to keep them low in stature. Ilaria del Carretto at Lucca, one of the earliest of its kind, is only three and a half feet from the ground, and yet this superb effigy, with its Tudor look, based upon a massive structure relieved by charming and decorous *enfantillage*, strikes the eye across the whole cathedral (fig. 100). Comparing it with the tomb of John XXII. at Avignon, we see that, although the Papal effigy is only raised five feet from the ground-level, a Gothic canopy, from which architecture banishes plastic art, rises nearly forty-five feet above it, making the whole composition top-heavy and smothering the figure below. Putting aside the Verona group which is out of doors, such tombs are not found in Italy, and the nearest approach is Bambaja's Gaston de Foix, where the tortured and restless accessories contrast unfavourably with the statuesque head of the hero (fig. 114). By keeping these detached tombs low and close to the spectator, and by avoiding canopies or *baldacchini*, a personal character is imparted to the monument, which moreover suggests itself

RECOMMENDED FIGURES ON TOMOS. FIGS. 100-105.  
To face p. 210.

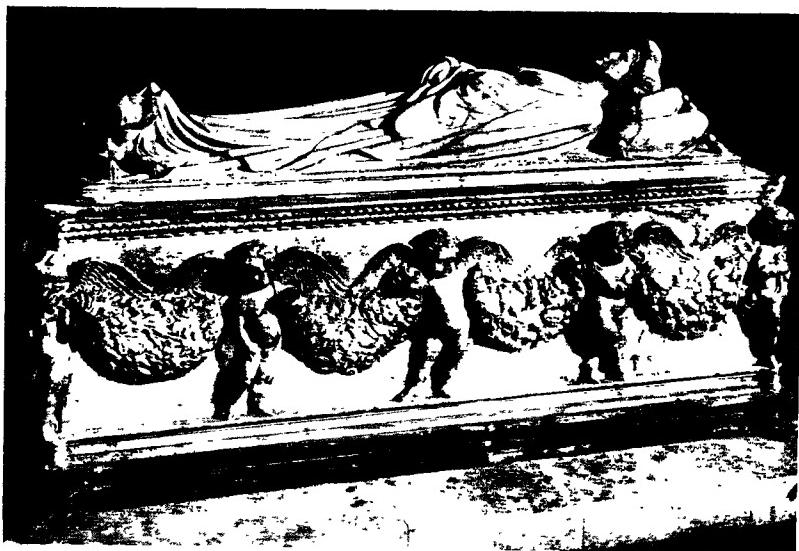


FIG. 100. ILARIA DEL CARRELLO. GIACOMO DELLA QUERCIA. LUCCA.

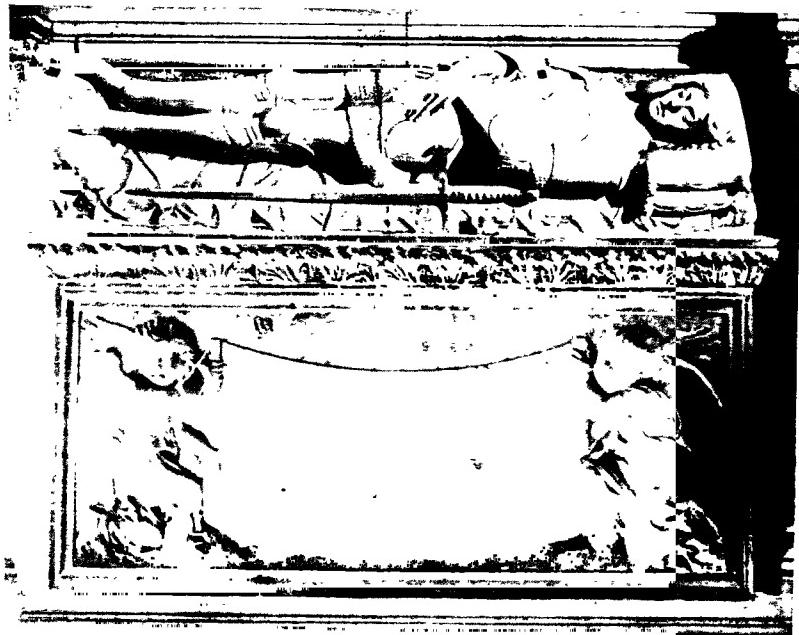


FIG. 101. GATTAMETTA. FADDA.

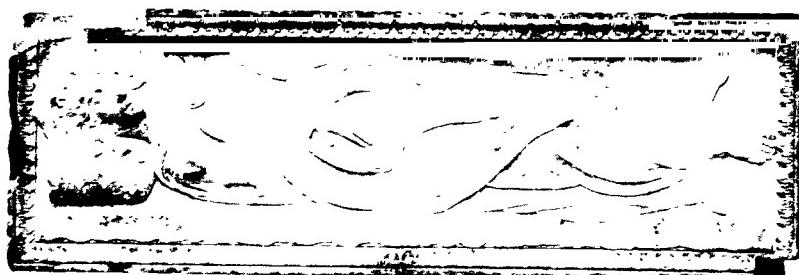


FIG. 102. SHRINE OF ST. JUSTINA, V. AND A. MUSEUM, LONDON.



FIG. 103.

HENRY VII., TINO DA CAMAINO, PISA.

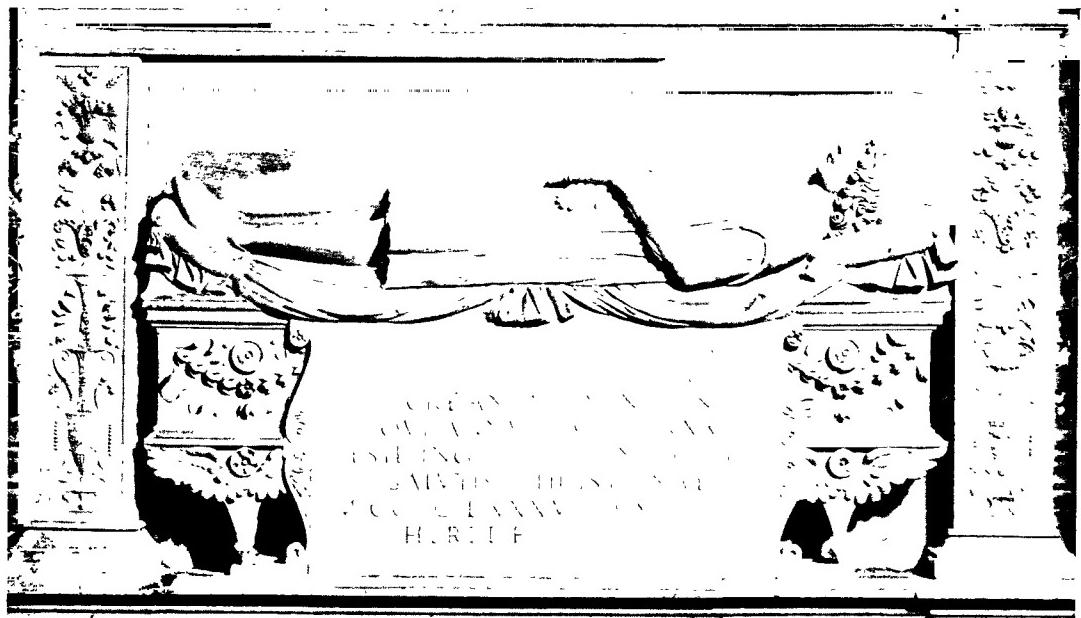


FIG. 104.

M. A. ALBERTONI, ROME.



FIG. 105.

SHRINE OF SAN ROMANO, LUCCA.

To face p. 211

as a real tomb rather than a cenotaph. Thus in those already described, as also in Torrigiano's Henry VII. in London, in the Guidarelli at Ravenna (fig. 113), in the so-called St. Christina at Bolsena (fig. 110), and lastly in Pollaiuolo's superb and majestic Sixtus IV. (fig. 112), there being little available space for mourners or angels, the portraiture of the deceased became a matter of primary moment, and the sculptor gave the effigy an abstraction, almost an idealism, which confers special distinction upon the monuments. But they remain an exceptional episode in Italian art. The mural tomb monopolised attention, probably from reluctance to sacrifice floor space. One does not find the tomb lying between the pillars of the nave, still less are whole chancels walled in by a succession of bilateral tombs like those of Westminster Abbey; neither were Italians in the habit of placing two, three, or even four effigies upon a single plaque, as one can see at St. Denis. Restraint rather than parsimony was responsible, since the Italians were ready to spend vast sums of money and to devote acres of side walls to memorials of the dead. Venice and the tombs of the Popes show that opulence in this direction was more than appreciated, though it was not until a later century that scale could effectively compete with composition.

TOMBS OF THE DOGES.—Venetian sculpture lacks the vital qualities of the Tuscan monuments. It must be admitted that, pleasing as

many of their tombs unquestionably are, their antiquarian interest and numerous problems of authorship are apt to absorb attention. The tomb of Tomaso Mocenigo, the work of two obscure Florentines (1423), the mutilated Buon monument in the Frari (1437) and its relation to the Master of the Pellegrini Chapel, and the Gothic survivals in the Foscari monument erected as late as 1457,—all these works are extremely curious and suggestive of fruitful critical researches; but the sculpture itself is of second order. Even the more ambitious works of the latter half of the century, contrasted with contemporary work of Florence, are disappointing. The most striking are the tombs of Pietro Mocenigo by Lombardi (1476), that of Andrea Vendramin perhaps by Leopardi (1480), and the well-known Tron monument of 1472. In all of them one can select vigorous details, each individual figure, despite some stiffness, being praiseworthy, and in certain cases imbued with acknowledged charm. But there is a lack of harmony between the component parts, little cohesion between the different storeys, while at a distance many of the caryatides, virtues, and so on look more like pillars than human beings. The Tron monument especially looks fragmentary, *décousu*; and lacking combination, the elements of successful composition are absent. None the less the stern tombs of the Doges, unrelieved by the gentle amenities of Desiderio, are full of character, reflecting in a plastic sense many

archaic survivals, and at the same time showing a combination of those factors which went to magnify the city itself—the confluence of Oriental influences through the Adriatic, and the close relations maintained by the Republic with central Europe as well as with the mainland of Italy proper. Venetian art is dominated by the Doge ; and this is readily understood, for he was elected by the people for a post of vast personal responsibility, and invested with traditional and symbolical status. He lived in the grandest palace of the city ; the power he wielded in the Republic was greater than that of the Pope in Rome, and far less precarious than that of the Tyrant of Padua or Milan. So far as art was concerned, he was alike the principal subject and the chief patron. The Bishop was ignored ; his portrait was seldom painted, and he was usually buried in a suburb. It is the Doge who is portrayed as the human agent for miraculous events, and he enjoyed the right of direct access to the Divine powers without the intervention of the Patriarch. His golden cap of office almost shines like an aureole. The best sites in the churches were reserved for Ducal monuments, and space was generously allocated. In the Frari their tombs are the governing feature, St. Francis being ignored in his own church even more severely than is St. Dominic in Zanipolo. Doges, however, preferred the painter's art, lavishing commissions upon the most famous men of the day, and handing down to posterity

that endless series of portraits, together with huge symbolical versions of Venetian politics. Unhappily, so far as sculpture is concerned, the Doge's portrait was with few exceptions made on canvas, but their monuments were conceived and executed upon a scale of magnificence rivalling that of the great Papal tombs in Rome, their variety being almost as great and their historical sequence almost as complete. One church alone stood out against this glorification of the Doge—St. Mark's, the official chapel of the City Council, in whom the appointment of the Dean was vested. Although largely independent of Pope and Patriarch (the Church having only become the Cathedral under the Napoleonic *régime*), and drawing much of its revenues and prestige from the rulers of the city, a self-denying ordinance in the matter of sepulture was exercised. The Doge had the most prominent seat in the church, and Sansovino adorned the pews with his bronze reliefs ; but no Doge received burial there after 1350, and the two tombs subsequent to that date, including the great Zeno monument, were placed outside the church proper. Moreover the gorgeous canopy of mosaic illustrated the history of the church rather than the supremacy of Venice or the fame of her rulers ; hence it is that the purely religious art of Venice can be so well studied at San Marco.

BAMBAJA AND MILANESE MONUMENTS.—Meanwhile the other Northern provinces reflect their



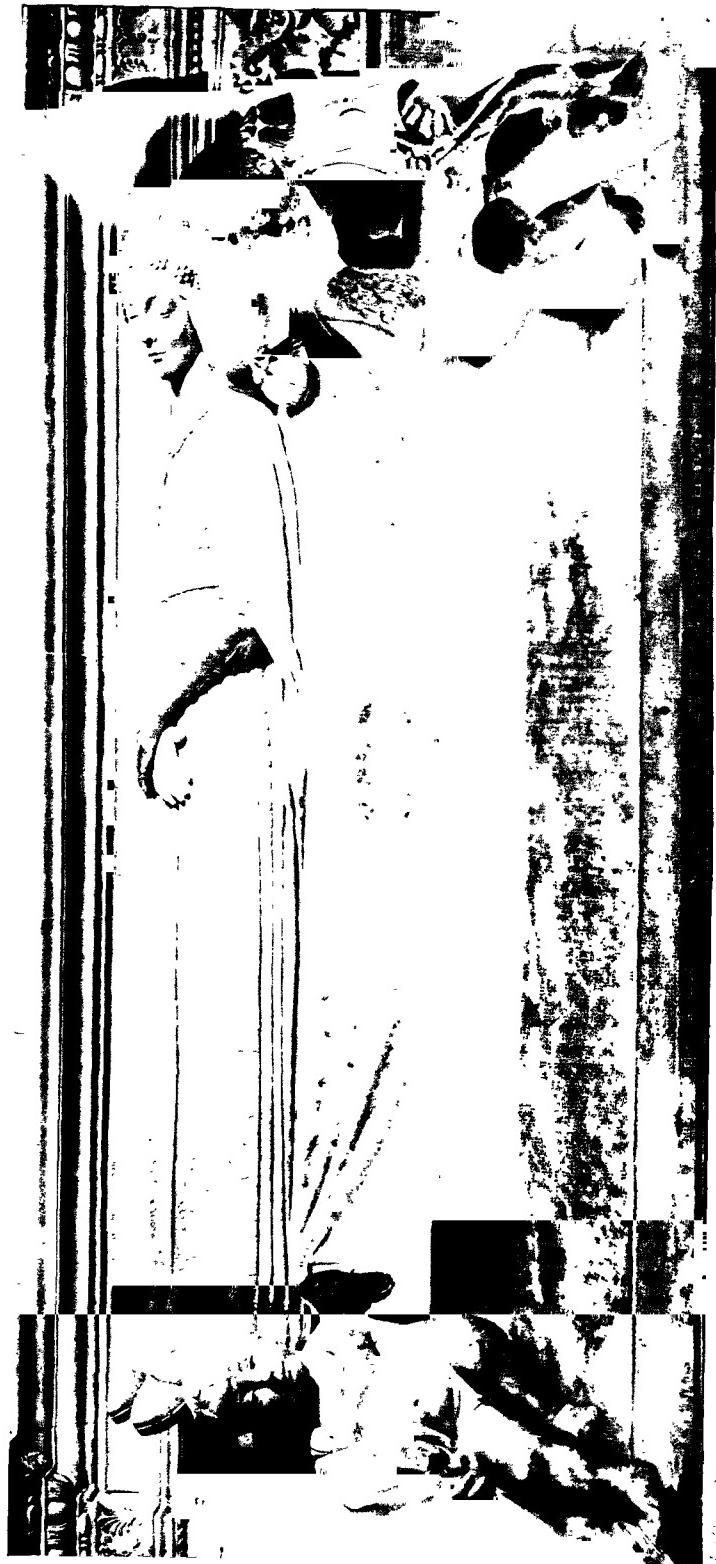


FIG. 106.  
MARY OF ARAGON, A. ROSSI LINNO, NAPLES.



FIG. 107.  
D'AMELIO GUIDARELLI, RAVENNA.

growing wealth and progressive thought in the range and standard of their tombs. Stimulating as their sepulchral art was, it cannot vie with Venetian sculpture for consistency, still less with Florentine art for æsthetic pre-eminence. But it is full of character. The variety of schools survived longer than elsewhere: Amadeo was not strong enough to concentrate plastic thought within his own ambit, but he was too conservative to submit to Southern influences, and even midland artists who found their way northwards lost some of their own grace and acquired a touch of Milanese asperity. For it cannot be maintained that Lombardy read her lessons in the Renaissance school from a Florentine text. She held out against centralisation, and encouraged academic freedom of thought; but daintiness and delicacy, and the search after beauty for the sake of true beauty as one sees it in the tombs of Bruni or Federighi, offered small attraction to their less sympathetic minds. At one moment, between 1470 and 1475, Amadeo may have approached Tuscan ideas in the two Colleone monuments at Bergamo, and the effigy of Medea, the general's daughter, is really interesting as showing tact in improving without undue flattery a countenance which is far from pleasing (fig. 111). This generation of northern sculptors was, however, too conscientious. The great tomb of St. Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, at Pavia, top-heavy as it is, would have more merit if one were not convinced that

the high polish of the marble had been a cardinal element in the original scheme. Likewise in the Milanese tombs of Brivio and Della Torre, Cazzanica directs one's attention to archaisms and eccentricities. Even Bambaja, with all his variety of form, does not deserve the reputation which has been largely based upon his association with the romantic figure of Gaston de Foix. The diminutive tomb of the poet Curzio in the Castello at Milan, and the rather defaced monument of Vimercati in the Cathedral, show that Bambaja did understand how to avoid the parasitic growth of small things on to large, the error which denies statuesque power and reserve to the now scattered tomb of Gaston de Foix. One must not judge Milanese sculpture of this period by the standard prevailing elsewhere, for though they approved of variety in form and divagation of sentiment, though moreover they were not blind to the attractions of novelty, they were certainly many years behind the Tuscan in skill and invention. What is really disappointing in Milanese art is that, while showing much resource, as well as great feeling for bas-relief and its adaptation to monumental sculpture, there was no adequate outcome, no really great or successful issue to four generations of diligent and painstaking study. So far as Milanese sculpture is concerned, Michael Angelo came fifty years too soon. All the sixteenth century marks a long-drawn-out compromise. If one examines typical examples of the

FIG. 108

MARIA DEL CARRILLO, GIACOMO DELL'ORTA, ELENA

Photo press





period, the Montini tomb at Parma (1507), the Sadoletto monument in Modena Museum (1517), the accomplished tomb of Sforza in the Steccata at Parma (1526), or Prospero Clementi's masterpiece in the Cathedral there, the monument of the jurist Prati (1542), one sees a protracted uncertainty of outlook, while during the later years of the century a similar hesitation will be noted. The Andreasi monument at Mantua, the Visconti tomb at Milan (1560), and indeed many others of local importance which could be named, are equally provincial, if such a term may be used, and lack the appearance of thorough experience and maturity. Their plastic traditions lag behind the standard to which they tried to conform. It is true enough that Andrea Sansovino (1460 to 1530), who is not only a link between the two centuries, but who, though Tuscan by birth, worked most of his life in Rome and in the North, is also addicted to compromise; but the compromise was of his own choice, combining a tinge of sternness with something akin to amiability, like the architecture beginning at that time to graft the pleasure-house on to the structure of the fortress.

DUPLICATION OF MOTIVE.—Sansovino typifies the softness of the sixteenth century, Michael Angelo its sternness; but Sansovino also marks the beginning of the tolerance for repetition or mechanical duplication, not inspired by any particular love of symmetry, but so far as one can

judge dictated to the patron by the artist. Rome was specially subject to this imposition, which was barely tolerated elsewhere. Since the Cosmati Rome never produced an indigenous school of art: her critics were less acute than elsewhere, and the artists who made the chief monuments were imported, idolised, and too often indulged. Or else, on the other hand, when a foreign Pope was chosen, or when some cultivated cardinal was despatched abroad, a good patron might suddenly disappear, and the artist might be cast adrift. Between 1300 and 1600 the length of the Pontificate only averaged seven years—forty Popes in three centuries—and there being no dynasty to carry on the traditions, whether political as in the case of the Hohenstaufens, or æsthetic as was the case with the Medici, a lack of continuity was absolutely inevitable. Rome was generally too rich, too poor, or too busy to act with consistent justice to art; but though hampered in many ways, artists enjoyed great freedom in some directions. They showed their mastery of the situation by commonplace iteration of design, and Sansovino was among the earliest to fall into this otiose habit. The tombs in Santa Maria del Popolo (1505 to 1507), unequalled for wealth of ornament in marble, which is almost too noble to require such feathery tracery, and designed at the same time with some largeness and decision, are in all essentials identical. One can appreciate circumstances where this symmetrical disposition

RECUMBENT EFFIGIES—DETAIL OF HEADS FIGS. 109-114  
To face p. 218.



FIG. 109.

BARBARA MANFREDI, F. DI SIMONE FIORENTINO, FORLI.



FIG. 110.

ST. CHRISTINA, G. DELLA ROBBIA, BOLSENA.



FIG. III.

ST. CECILIA, COLLEONE, AMADLO, BERGAMO.



FIG. 112.

SIXTUS IV., POLLAIUOLO, ROME.



FIG. 113.

G. GUIDARELLI, RAVENNA.



FIG. 114.

GASTON DE FOIX, BAMBAYA, MILAN.

To face p. 219

is charged with meaning, for instance in the tombs of twin children, in the Armellini monument in Santa Maria in Trastevere, where the two recumbent figures are grouped into a single composition, or again in Nola's tomb of the Severini at Naples recording the three lads poisoned in 1525.

TOMBS OF THE POPES.—Where some explanation of the replica is obvious a measure of sameness can be overlooked. But the Papal monuments present glaring examples of monotonous repetition. There are two such duplicates in the Church of Sant' Andrea della Valle. In the Minerva the pair is identical in theme and treatment, dull and discursive in both. The parents of Clement VIII. in the same church are modelled on identical lines, hardly justified by the connubial felicity of Silvestro and Loesa Aldobrandini. In Santa Maria Maggiore, a pair of gigantic tombs seems to have been designed by Ponzio as an integral portion of the chapel, from which no deviation could be allowed; and consequently, except for the political incidents related on the bas-reliefs, these monuments of Clement VIII. and Paul V. are to all intents and purposes replicas, without individuality, and simply taking their places upon the wall as cool and refreshing interludes between agate and jasper. These duplications are not the offspring of symmetry: they do not suggest the counterbalance of Beggarelli's big groups, nor were they the logical sequence of

architectural necessities which control the treatment of the façade ; one's inclination is to ascribe them to a creative languor which is bred by contact with apathetic or uncritical patronage. Yet the marvellous group of Papal tombs in Rome (mostly dating from the sixteenth century, the earlier examples with few exceptions having been completely destroyed or seriously modified in translation from old St. Peter's) shows no loss of self-respect on the sculptor's side, and certainly there are few signs of waning ambition. The Pride of Earth and Ashes has erected to the honour of departed Popes a series of tombs, lacking it is true certain qualities which sculptors can ill afford to lose, but powerful, magnanimous, and curiously enough, impersonal. The garrulous bas-reliefs which narrate success in politics and warfare, more often than distinction in theology or art, differentiate the tombs in detail, but as a group they are essentially memorials of Pontificalism. The Pope, though as a rule of advanced age at his death, is generally portrayed at a moment of vigorous virility : seated in the act of benediction, kneeling in the spirit of intercession, or, like Michael Angelo's Julius II., imbued with a gesture of revenge—Popes that is to say as Popes, not as repentant sinners or departed saints. After 1500 the recumbent figure vanishes, or where introduced in a half-hearted form, it was considered imperative to display the commanding head and features, and also to indicate the gesture

of the uplifted hand. The calm effigy reposing upon the catafalque, *expectans resurrectionem*, was held inapposite to the Roman scheme, for there had arisen a considered method and tradition in Papal tombs—speaking, that is to say, of the group which has been erected since the time of Donatello's John XXIII., the last monument outside the City. It was necessary that the tomb, impersonal as it was, and often indistinguishable from its pendant except by the heraldry, and in the portraits which in themselves were frequently similar in type and invariably so in costume—it was thought right that the tomb should be on a great and colossal scale. One Pope, Rospigliosi, named Clement IX., desired to lie in obscurity, but his successor, “ne (cineres) absque ullo sepulchrali honore, sicut ipse jusserrat, humi laterent,” ordered the ambitious monument in Santa Maria Maggiore.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> BEAUTIFICATION AND RESTORATION OF MONUMENTS.—Such examples of piety were of course common. The monument of Innocent XII., who died in 1700, was not ordered till 1746, or rather did not assume its present form until that date. . . . “Inornatum monumentum in hanc elegantem formam redigi curavit Vincentius Cardinalis,” etc. Similarly Nicholas IV. seems to have been unhandsomely buried: five hundred years later Sixtus V. remedied this and erected a new tomb for the Pope “cum in neglecto diu sepulchro fere latuisset,” and *en revanche* for this magnanimity the Cardinal, as he then was, managed to display his own coat-of-arms on the monument four times. Another Cardinal, Peretti, in 1613, remodelled the tomb of Pius II. in Sant'Andrea della Valle, “monumentum restituit et ornavit,” and next year he did the same for Pius III. which “e Vaticano translatum magnificentius reponendum curavit.” The dispersion of Papal tombs from old St. Peter's was simply

THE EPITAPH.—It is often from epitaphs that valuable evidences of criticism emerge, and most of all do the fine rotund phrases inscribed on Papal tombs reflect and sometimes magnify the "sepulchral honours" of the deceased. Like the tombs these epitaphs are impersonal. One would equally fit in with another, for they betray the uniformity governed by long convention, just as the monuments themselves show uniformity which

lamentable, and their erection elsewhere, even when accompanied by restoration, was a high act of charity. But this idea of beautification was not limited to monuments of which circumstances compelled the destruction or removal. Contracts exist showing that paintings were not merely restored but repainted *ab initio*: indeed one of the arguments advanced in the sixteenth-century dialogues about the rivalry between painting and sculpture, is that the latter is the more noble art because, among other reasons, it cannot be constantly changed like a picture. Sculpture, however, suffered from restoration almost as gravely as from "beautification." In 1474 Sixtus IV. actually issued an edict against the removal of such objects from churches. External work is of course doomed to perish by gradual and natural detrition, and it is more than doubtful if ten per cent. of the exposed marble on the exterior of the Cathedrals of Florence or Siena is original: replacement where honest is always justified by necessity. It would be tedious to give a list of great churches which, like the Cathedral at Mantua, contain literally nothing of a date anterior to reconstruction, but it is worth noting the complacency which prevailed, and that wherever "beautification" took place the fact was recorded with pride. It is strange to read the inscription on the priceless though somewhat uncouth reliefs in Santa Restituta at Naples: to our generation they mark a suggestive but ill-defined stage in the evolution of Southern art. To the eighteenth-century restorer one of the panels seemed to be "*eleganter incisam*," and so in reconstruction he placed it in still more favourable surroundings, "*elegantiori formâ*." Most instructive of all is the much revered statue of San Gemignano in the Cathedral at Modena, dating perhaps from the fourteenth century: its interest lies in the fact that we have records of its restoration and repainting in 1509, 1602, 1702, 1790, 1822, 1853, and 1903. It will be observed that the cycle has a tendency to decrease.

springs from that professionalism so noticeable among Roman sculptors, who seem to have been wholly devoid of misgivings and doubts. Never since 1455, when the great Thomas of Sarzana was buried, has a Papal epitaph been written in verse. Prose, and sometimes prosaic prose, best suited the scheme of uniformity in this grand sequence, best harmonised with something akin to anonymity in Pontificism, where a man who might well be a foreigner was chosen by secret ballot, then surrendered his name, abandoned his home, and left no descendants. Here and there a personal note creeps in, and welcome it is. Leo XI. died in 1605, and his tomb is the only one of the series which possesses a really individual distinction. In the epitaph one catches a flavour of regret that his reign should have only lasted twenty-seven days; and the pretty rosebuds sculptured on the base—in themselves unique in St. Peter's, and the only genuine bit of modern decoration in the whole structure—illustrate the motto daintily interwoven with the flowers, "sic Florui." It carries one back a hundred years!

EMBLEMS OF MORTALITY.—While there is an element of sameness in this suite of tombs—uniformity in the material, ideas of structure, scale and design, normal pompousness in the magnificent nymphs and babies representing the virtues and aspirations of the Church—none the less this very monotony throughout the long series marks the permanence and above

all the continuity of Papal traditions, perhaps indeed of the Papacy itself. And moreover they are the most wholesome group of late Italian monuments. Baroque as many of them are (the essentials of this phase are discussed in Chapter IX.), they rarely show the ugly aspect of late sepulchral art, where sinister lessons are inculcated by excessive use of the emblems of mortality. Bernini contrives to invest the skeletons upon the tombs of Urban VIII. and Alexander VII. with a certain dignity which to some extent justifies their prominence. In the accomplished monument of Queen Christina farther down the nave of St. Peter's, the skull, out of compliment to her Royal Highness, is duly crowned. Originally the skull placed at the foot of the Cross connoted an obvious symbolical meaning dictated by analogy, and not by the fancy which peopled the old-world bestiaries with demoniacs, and which later on assumed an utilitarian form in gargoyles or grotesques. Italy never quite shared the Northern belief in the imminence of death. The fear of sudden death which seems to have haunted the generation of Albert Dürer was indigenous to German art, to the land of dark forests and long winters; and the almost mystic Todtentanz was Germanic in origin as well as in name. Under these conditions undue stress upon such emblems, specially objectionable in tombs where their contrast with what at least ought to be a peaceful effigy or portrait borders on caricature,

marks a faulty aspect of Italian judgment. How, or indeed why, it actually began it is difficult to say. In some of the early tombs, such as Donatello's Brancacci at Naples or the Della Valle tomb in the Lateran, the recumbent figure does not merely record a dead man, but it shows him as a corpse.

THE CHARNEL HOUSE.—The next stage is most disagreeably represented at Avignon, where the odd *dépayisé* Franco-Italian school, in the monument of the Cardinal de la Grange, proceeds to decompose the corpse. Meanwhile the humble little skull on the base of Rossellino's Portogallo tomb (fig. 99), 1465, is developed in a whole frieze of skulls and crossbones on the tomb of Piero Soderini by Benedetto da Rovezzano (1512). Amadeo's relief at the Certosa (1500) of four little angels praying before a skull was a devotional rendering which scarcely ever reappears; indeed it is in the North that exaggeration played the strangest antics. In San Francesco at Ferrara, the Villa tomb shows a well-clothed body surmounted by a skeleton head. Reggio d'Emilia had a positive passion for the charnel house. Bishop Ottavio's tomb is notable for the winged skull; the epitaph of the clever Marliano tomb is being written by a draped skeleton.<sup>1</sup> Cardinal

<sup>1</sup> There are two good examples of this popular motive in San Pietro in Vincoli at Rome: the Vecchiarelli monument consists of portrait medallions held up by two full-length skeletons articulated with loving care. In the Aldobrandini tomb (1707) a heroic-sized figure of Time is the dominant theme. He is winged, and one hand shows the hour-

Toschi and his valet, who are buried *vis-à-vis* to each other, are recorded by capital portrait busts, beneath each one being a well-rendered skull with broken teeth. The Bishop's skull revolves on a pivot and diverts the townsfolk. This hideous idea, too ridiculous, it may be remarked, to be painful, reappeared in an aggravated form in the Ghislenus monument at Santa Maria del Popolo. The monument is quite small, consisting of an inscription and a skull, the teeth of which are rotten, an occasional molar having disappeared altogether. This emblem of mortality is placed inside a shallow recess behind metal bars. One scarcely knows what motives bred these singular combinations, certainly not the exaggeration which springs from poverty of invention, for these sculptors were fertile in ideas; neither was there any prevailing delight in the portrayal of vice and misery, nor when the worst is alleged against Italian Baroque can it be urged that boastfulness was wholly responsible. The ordinary excuse for sensationalism, whether in art or advertisement, is that without emphasis it is impossible to be didactic: such a plea might conceivably be advanced to justify the horrible scenes of martyrology in Santo Stefano Rotondo, where a clean run of wall, perhaps three hundred and fifty feet in length, is devoted to a gruesome and nauseous circuit of

glass and the other brandishes a scythe; but so much were people infected with ideas of the mortuary that Father Time is also dead, and here masquerades in the guise of a skeleton.

the torture chamber. No explanation is valid in these extravagances of monumental art ; it is likely enough that they represent an honest phase of emotionalism.

TERRIBILITÀ.—Nothing in Italian sculpture is more difficult to trace than the development of dramatic sense, nothing more elusive, and it might be added that in this field contradictions are most often encountered and least often adjusted. Dramatic as their art was, it did not insist upon the dramatic aspect of tragic events as a normal instrument of creation. Moreover, where the intellectual side of sculpture is studied, the mental properties are always found to overlap : what is dramatic in Amadeo would be pure bombast in Algardi or in Mosca, while physical conditions and technical knowledge both make and unmake what was well called *Terribilità*. Intellectually the early forms are broadly enveloped by one or another phase of exaggeration, sometimes superstition, sometimes ferocity. Tradition says that Spinello Aretino died of fright at his own pictorial evocation of Beelzebub : one may disbelieve the story, but we cannot deny that it was once credible. In the same spirit Fra Angelico never quite understood what Hell ought to be like. He wished his picture to be overwhelming, so he forced the uglinesses, filling his composition with clots of blood and tongues of fire. Paradise he did understand : it was his living ideal. His conception of Purgatory would have been dramatic. This

overcharging of the accessories, this accumulation of proofs, while ignoring the fundamental conditions which should reduce them to a proper proportion, is well illustrated by Benozzo Gozzoli's St. Sebastian at San Gemignano, where the martyr is pierced with no less than thirty arrows. Giovanni Pisano, following in the wake of Niccolo, tried to be intensely dramatic, but he again multiplied the detail without increasing the drama; indeed isolation, physical or moral, is one of the ruling symbols of tragedy, and it need not be inconsistent with a crowded scene. "I acknowledge that I have felt more compassion at the sight of a single highwayman going to Tyburn than at the Massacre of two thousand Innocents, though executed by Nicholas Poussin himself."<sup>1</sup>

THE SENSE OF DRAMA.—If truth be stranger than fiction, art is far more dramatic than reality. The sordid elements can be diluted or suppressed, while the central act can be definitively centralised. One finds this first of all in Dante; the poet could encompass these things before Giotto, his contemporary. Then painting took the lead, and finally sculpture, having mastered the physical conditions of complex subject-matter, became supreme in dramatic art. With Donatello, Giacomo della Quercia, Ghiberti, and Brunel-

<sup>1</sup> And the author adds, "This convinces me that I am not endued with the organs of a connoisseur." John Moore, the writer in question, is now forgotten: his book repays study. "View of Society and Manners in Italy," 3rd edition, 1787, i. 263.

lesco, four of the giants who competed for the north door of the Florentine Baptistery in 1403, we reach a generation of sculptors who far surpassed their contemporary painters in real concentrated drama. A scene from the Passion was no longer necessary to embody their ideas. A single head like the Habakkuk on the Campanile, an Annunciation like Ghiberti's first version, or Giacomo's Ilaria del Carretto (fig. 108), were more than sufficient. Andrea della Robbia lets the weeping angels hide their faces in their hands (*La Verna*) ; even in the rather unsensitive school of Amadeo we find a passionate, indeed a poignant feeling of warm-hearted sympathy for the saint and martyr. But sculpture moved rapidly. It soon lost the distinction between the dramatic event and its apposite representation. Compare, for instance, Gian Bologna's Rape of the Sabine Women (figs. 24-26) with Donatello's Judith (fig. 29). The first subject is as dramatic as anything that can be imagined ; painful, picturesque, emblematic, ferocious—a prodigious combination which Gian Bologna uses as a vehicle for pyrotechnics—unequalled in dexterity, but, as drama goes, a failure. Judith, no doubt a heroine, liberates her persecuted race, but as a condition of success contrives to drug the victim and then executes what is already a virtual corpse. Donatello's statue seems to chill the atmosphere of the Loggia de' Lanzi. The whole scheme is frigid ; there is a supernatural calm as the avenging sword is poised

mid-air above the comatose Holophernes. This is real drama. Perhaps it is enhanced by some of the complements of pathos—helplessness, for instance, which in a very different connection is the source of unwearied admiration for the foundlings of Andrea della Robbia (figs. 51-52), and also the mainspring of the memorial to the infant Princess of Anjou (fig. 96). But pathos, as distinct from mysticism, admits of no ready analysis in plastic art, though one may schedule certain elements which, combined or separately, reflect this secondary phase of drama. Helplessness is one of them; perhaps also fidelity as one sees it on the features of a dead soldier, Guidarelli's upturned face for example (fig. 113), or in the classical analogue of the "dying Persian" of the Terme Museum at Rome. What constitutes the pathos of the so-called Sleeping Fury need not be analysed when one is in the presence of one of the most profound and significant triumphs of Roman art (fig. 87). Intercession which gives pathos to so many religious scenes, plaintiveness of which Agostino di Duccio was the exponent (fig. 85), fervour, and abnegation—all these sentiments prevailed here or there, colouring individual works, and sometimes a whole school. Padua, a seat of Tyrants and home of learning, a town with straggling *piazze*, dark colonnades, and vague stretches of empty land within its walls (much like the Aventine Hill)—Padua for no special reason is associated with the grim side of

plastic art. Something of the hard flinty character of Squarcione's school, and some of the grey moods of Mantegna, seem to have settled upon its sculptors, who for the most part are anonymous and second-rate. Bellano's tomb of Rocca-Bonella, a gaunt heavy composition, has a chiaroscuro which pervades the local sculpture in Paduan churches and streets: though robust and substantial, it has that fugitive unreality of a tapestry hunting-scene. And as Paduan sculpture developed, it assumed a more and more fervid character. Donatello's Entombment was significant, but the Piagnone spirit which succeeded it, lingering upon illusions of fasting and asceticism, produced an exuberance wherever the subject justified any presentment of affliction. Such refinements as the sense of pity were submerged in the more comprehensive expressions; all the stages successively leading up to torment—apprehension, anxiety, alarm, anguish, each one of which has its own dramatic virtue—were ignored, and the Passion scenes, which were then much in vogue, are marked by strident despair and explosions of hysterical grief. These sculptors penetrated too far into the secrets of sorrow. They were unconsciously producing caricatures. All sense of calm and repose was lost, and they forgot the good Christian virtue of resignation.

GIACOMO DELLA QUERCIA.—Giacomo della Quercia is the born dramatist of the early Renaissance, still imbued with Gothic traditions, but

responsive to the rising sap of his own generation. The jury appointed in 1403 to select a design for the bronze gates afterwards set up in Florence by Ghiberti, condemned Giacomo's panel for the double fault of inharmonious grouping and for lacking elegance. These are the very qualities which differentiate him from his peers, and confer upon his art an austerity and grandeur too rare in the first half of the Quattrocento. Giacomo's output was small : we know him best by his reliefs, which have greatly suffered ; and as for the man himself, our slender knowledge of his personality must be drawn from his works, or inferred from his controversies with patrons who chafed at his protracted delays. The Fonte Gaya, the town fountain of Siena, less fortunate than the great Basin at Perugia, only exists in a suite of *torsi*; but Giacomo della Quercia can survive the reduction of his works to fragments, which still retain their eloquence, for his statuary was massive and his chisel very sure. There was always something held in reserve. The tomb of Ilaria del Carretto, where drama is superimposed upon sentiment, strikes one as showing a total absence of effort ; it is essentially spontaneous and natural, but restrained by that frugality which is the characteristic he handed down to the Turini, to Cozzarelli and Neroccio, men of robust and rather heavy touch, who inherited but little from Giacomo except his stern hostility to detail. For Giacomo was the master of essentials, and his

art contains the fundamental bases of statuary as opposed to the ever-changing details and fashions which to later men became the essentials. He was great, but not at the expense of his colleagues, and his grandeur was precocious. His copyists were simple too, but they did not realise that Giacomo only dealt with big things and their broad aspects, because too busy to devote attention to the little ones ; hence his neglect of amenities and elegance. His art was not based upon rules, conventions, or canons, being imbedded in his character, which could not be transmitted : he had no school. As M. Raymond says in a generous phrase, "*Giacomo n'eut qu'un élève et il se fit attendre un siècle, ce fut Michelange.*"

MICHAEL ANGELO AS DRAMATIST.—And when Michael Angelo came every attribute of the High Renaissance seemed to throng round him ; and with him the Renaissance, or New Birth, also marked the full maturity of the *ancien régime*. His complicated character is not made less enigmatic by the fact that he was painter and sculptor alike ; but being a profound dramatist it is interesting that he should have recorded his personal preference for plastic art. He respected painting, he excelled in it ; but sculpture was the chosen medium for his revelation of fresh emotions, or rather unrealised aspects of emotions which are as old as civilisation. Like the greatest painters of his day, he required no accessories and employed few epithets. Then as now the public

probably loved well-contrived and "exquisite" detail, something to remember without undue mental effort—a sparrow, a pomegranate, a candle-stick—while the main theme could pass unheeded. In this Michael Angelo was absolutely rigorous and uncompromising. Instead of vexatious and distracting detail he used light and shade; to him clear spaces, with their broad complementary shadows, were illuminating and decorative assets of the purest order. They confer upon his statues some of the massiveness which had almost lain dormant since the days of the Pharaohs. But the statuesque pose of Egyptian portraits, that half-magnetised stillness, as if the kings had been modelled in a hypnotic trance, while giving an air of unchangeable, unchallengeable sovereignty, sacrificed one aspect of drama which Michael Angelo well knew how to employ—the sense of movement. Not indeed that he required *motion* any more than he used narrative; but potential movement, moral it might be, the indication of all those restlessnesses of body or soul which focussed the dramatic crisis. In the vague, enigmatic, and motionless countenance of La Gioconda, there is all the latent power of mobility, all the smouldering fire of crisis; and so in Michael Angelo's Slave (fig. 74), the struggle is told by the weary face and gesture of despair—the chain is not needed to indicate servitude. Outward forms were superfluous. His Victory carries no sword, his Madonna has no halo, his Princes are not

crowned ; yet such was the intensity of conception, and the unity of his ideas which emerged in a monolithic mass, that all the lesser means of portraying emotion, indeed of telling the story, vanished before the master mind. The intellectual side of Michael Angelo's drama is so prominent, and above all so assured ; but at times too metaphysical to make his meaning clear. Thus one may explain the Medici tombs in varied senses, but always one must revert for their exposition to the sculptor's own sonnet. To analyse them too closely, as Mr. Walter Pater observed, is to inflict an injustice : "They concentrate and express, less by way of definite conceptions than by the touches, the promptings of a piece of music, all those vague fancies, misgivings, presentiments, which shift and mix and define themselves and fade again, whenever the thoughts try to fix themselves with sincerity on the conditions and surroundings of the disembodied spirit. I suppose no one would come to the sacristy of San Lorenzo for consolation ; for seriousness, for solemnity, for dignity of impression, perhaps, but not for consolation. It is a place neither for terrible nor consoling thoughts, but of vague and wistful speculation." But mystic as Michael Angelo was, even to the verge of quietism, drama shines forth pre-eminently throughout his career : analysis one does not really require when touching the heart of the man himself, the cardinal theme of his emotion, the

236 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE  
embodiment of his transcendent art. He was the most dramatic of Italian sculptors, and he was also the last survivor of the great generation.

DECLINE OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.—Not only did Michael Angelo outlive his contemporaries, but he long outlived the intellectual and religious standards of his youth so far as they applied to sculpture. The decline of religious thought is a topic on which theologians can dispute indefinitely, and its history as manifested in plastic art is an intricate problem not to be solved by mere catalogues of subject-matter. One recognises at the outset that the art of the early Christians was almost exclusively devoted to the illustration of their religion: at the other end of the scale it is equally clear that such men as Pigalle or Barye (who were without Italian analogues) did not draw their inspiration from religion and worked profitably without it. Art, however, on more than one occasion threatened to act as mistress rather than handmaiden of the Church, and St. Bernard is explicit in his warning against art being allowed to join forces with opulence. *In sacro quid facit aurum?* is one of his questions, and he condemns the enhanced sacredness ascribed to some relic owing to the beautification of its shrine: *ostenditur pulcherrima forma sancti vel sanctæ alicujus, et eo creditur sanctior quo coloratior.*<sup>1</sup> Whatever the progress of art, such ostentation may well connote decline in

<sup>1</sup> Printed in Migne, Vol. 182, col. 914.

religious thought. The Church quickly absorbed the movement, directing it into proper channels and employing it for didactic ends ; but the sumptuary laws and the controversies associated with Savonarola's bonfire show that art and morals were at times brought into acute conflict. The causes were twofold : on the one hand religious sentiment was made exotic by visionaries who carried their infatuation much too far, in humanising religious figures by means of costume, jewellery, polychromacy, and so forth. Italy was either too logical or too sincere to permit the extravagances of Spain, where the bilious coloration of their statues and their colossal overdressed dolls, fail to suggest asceticism on the one hand or reverence on the other. In 1591 the Capitular authorities of Cadiz actually forbade the clothing and unclothing of graven images, and extended the edict to statues in private hands. Italy, however, went quite far enough to offend religious susceptibilities. Most objectionable was the practice of fixing plastic ornaments upon pictorial works of art, an unhappy combination which equally reduces the devotional and the æsthetic value of the picture. Crivelli and Cossa were specially fond of these superfluous adjuncts, and in the town of Savona an unusual number of paintings are thus disfigured. Sansovino's Madonna in Sant' Agostino at Rome shows how completely the piety of generous donors of jewellery, necklaces, and votive offerings, can

shroud the graceful lines of a statue. However, it was not excessive zeal even when bordering upon vulgarity (often that of a later generation) which dissociated art from religious subject-matter. One may say that until the end of the Cinquecento the output of religious sculpture was greater in Italy than elsewhere, or rather that wherever the commission was of an ecclesiastical nature, shrine, tomb, pulpit, or façade, some religious subject was an inevitable theme, even if only used symbolically.<sup>1</sup> But the tomb, while contributing much to portraiture as a derivative branch of art, heralds that development in which the pleasures to be derived soon outweighed the lessons to be taught. It was the tomb which first of all lost its Christian character. It was not merely Verrochio's technical love of craftsmanship which accounts for the absence of the faintest sign of Christianity in the double Medici monument in San Lorenzo Florence (1472). One may assume that the literary and humanistic tastes of the period, revelling in the wealth of fresh ideas drawn from modern Europe as well as from ancient writers, may perhaps have produced a certain weariness of the Christian yoke, some impatience with the Biblical scenes reiterated since archaic times, with small variation of personnel or environment. An apathy set in; but it was

<sup>1</sup> Exceptions can of course be quoted, and even as early as the thirteenth century the pulpit at Santa Maria del Valdarno is without a Christian symbol.

unrelated to indolence, for those who were least sympathetic towards the monopoly of Christian sculptors were among the most zealous partisans of emancipation. But if scenes from scripture or hagiography were banished, something more human and vivacious than Verrochio's delicate carving and metal work was required : the Medici tomb is pure decoration without life or sentiment, with no incident or suggestion—simply a cogent proof of the potential grace of lines, surfaces, and curves.

HUMANISM AND CLASSICAL PARAPHRASE.—To those who were satiated with Christianity the legends of antiquity offered a fruitful vein. Pollaiuolo's tomb of Sixtus IV. (1493), important as a work of art, is much more significant as an intellectual landmark. Though resting in the great Basilica, and though commemorating a Pope, it marks a deliberate, almost an aggressive exclusion of Christian fact and dogma. One little emblem is introduced quite apologetically, and looks all the more plaintive from the somewhat free treatment of the pagan subjects with which it is surrounded. Not that hostility towards the Church need be alleged : on the contrary, there was little bitterness in the sixteenth-century sculptors ; but classical nomenclature, sentiment, and tradition filled their minds, even if it did not radically modify their art. Thus four statues upon the Poggio Imperiale outside Florence (wrecks from the Cathedral façade, which was

destroyed in order to make room for trashy ephemeralæ to enliven a grand-ducal marriage in the sixteenth century) originally represented Major prophets, but were solemnly rechristened Homer, Virgil, Petrarch, and Dante: Petrarch by the way, like Ariosto, lived to see his own literature rewritten as a Christian Romance. Vasari blames Bandinelli for putting Apostles on a par with or in inferiority to Leo X. and Clement VII., on the tombs of those Pontiffs in the Minerva—surely a singular criticism; they could so easily be changed to minor lights, for less apostolic figures were never made. However, this habit of renaming old statues, customary in the city of Rhodes to avoid the expense of new ones, together with the substitution of new heads for old, a matter of comment in Dion Chrys.<sup>1</sup> was not limited to one party in the strife. Montorsoli, who in this connection it is worth noting was a Servite friar, placed such extremely classical versions of Minerva and Apollo upon the tomb of Sannazzari at Naples that they were ultimately transformed into Judith and Moses: the Bacchic centrepiece was, however, left unaltered, and the change of name doubtless convinced the Purists that a pagan monument had been converted to Christianity, with the easy assurance which sanctified the Colosseum and the Baths of Caracalla by adorning the entrance with a Papal shield and three prescribed initials. Michael

<sup>1</sup> "Orat. Rhod.," xxxi.

Angelo was attacked for irreligion; Vincenzio Grandi for the paganism of his sculpture,<sup>1</sup> and other examples could be quoted. But surveying the controversy one concludes that the battle was unreal. By the Church it was directed against a classicism which in sculpture only represented the unessentials,—the literary side of an art which was neither pagan in its ideals nor hostile in its practice. In other branches of art paganism was once a threatening force, although the catalogues of the Index (which should accurately reflect the dangers of any particular decade), indicate that satires against the corporate Church were more to be feared, than assaults upon a morality which remained fundamentally sound. Later paragraphs will show how the Christian thought, though all-pervading, became blurred, though it was never stifled: it remained a fruitful and generous motive throughout the least vital and least attractive periods of Italian sculpture.

<sup>1</sup> See the curious document in Gonzati, i. 161.

## CHAPTER VII

### SECULAR THOUGHT AND SECULAR FORM

ABSENCE OF NORTHERN ANALOGIES.—Secular thought and secular form, the ideals which created the pictorial schools of Holland and the castellated architecture of Normandy, never secured the foot-hold in Italy which gave them a commanding position elsewhere. Secular monuments of course were manifold—portraits, equestrian statues, and all the plastic decoration applied to the dwelling house; for the development of a religious art creates ambitions as well as openings for secular art, and the two can prosper concurrently. In Italy, however, the leading partner, like the most consistent patronage, was associated with chivalry. The Arthurian and Carolingian epics, the Chansons de geste, the whole cycle of Sagas dependent upon the Nieblungenlied—in short those poetic movements which had become the daily literature of Northern peoples, were ultramontane and never took root in Italy. The Troubadour was Provençal, not Italian. The romantic writers of the Renaissance, who tried to introduce epic literature and romances of chivalry,

failed to acclimatise the foreign growth: popular as their full-blooded poetry became, it represented little more than adaptations of foreign efforts, lacking the spontaneity which vitalised the original models, and moreover coming too late in the day to inspire plastic art. Among Northern nations the Romances of Chivalry which were linked to the prowess of the hero-king, and all the traditions bound up with knight-errantry, passed from the fabulous to the historical stage while sculpture was immature or non-existent. When the art had acquired strength enough to do justice to these moving scenes, church portals and façades were ready to receive those majestic rows of kings and queens, warriors and heroes, which form the glory of Chartres or Amiens. Such things do not exist south of the Alps, where unofficial canonisation of bygone rulers was rare. And it is a matter of surprise, considering the number of free states in the Peninsula and the rapid succession of their despots, that monumental art of a purely secular and historical nature should be relatively uncommon; even the leading guilds and municipalities, which began to exercise a considerable influence upon sculpture towards the middle of the thirteenth century, dispensed a patronage which was often wholly religious in character. The sculptor's mind, moreover, was little biased towards the study of secular form as an end in itself; occasionally, it is true, one sees statues which show that their authors have tried to

analyse the teachings of ethnography, and thus to infuse local colouring and sentiment. Matteo Civitale's Zacharias at Genoa and the Milanese relief of St. John preaching (Certosa Museum), are examples which suggest painstaking study, a thoughtful effort to give the Jew the character and semblance of a Jew, thus introducing a certain realism which was usually deficient. The Turkish portraits by Gentile Bellini and Pinturichio, have a real historical merit based upon candid and discerning observation. The practice of presenting the actors in a religious scene garbed in the costume of the artist's own day, has its own value as showing the catholicity of time, place, and race which was associated with the sacred narrative; moreover the architecture, dress, surroundings, and physiognomies, being all alike based upon accurate observation of the local ethnography of the hour, we owe much to the confidence which has preserved a thousand valuable records without incurring the charge of affectation and sensationalism nowadays inseparable from such ventures. Sculpture depended upon modernity less than painting, and though certain schools, the Pavian in 1480 for instance, were faithful, yet the initial advantages conferred by using modified classical drapery instead of the exacting costumes of Italy, were too great to be disregarded. Thus it comes about that, though much of the religious sculpture under our observation is tinged with laic sentiment, we only detect the whole-

hearted purposes and symbols of secular form where the artist was engaged upon avowedly secular work.

EPHEMERIDÆ.—Historical scenes being relatively rare, one has to turn towards productions of a more decorative and less specific character—fountains, trophies, colossi, and triumphal arches. As regards works of an ephemeral character, their very nature has prevented posterity from deriving much useful knowledge from them, and although merely erected as pageantry for some festive week, they were entrusted to artists of such distinction that their importance must have been fully recognised; and one cannot help regretting that so few examples escaped destruction, if the charming stucco work inside the courtyard of the Palazzo Vecchio at Florence is a sample of what the Renaissance could extemporise. Papal coronations afforded fitting opportunities for such displays, and in 1513 Jacopo Sansovino did some remarkable things to commemorate the advent of Leo X. The triumphal entry of some foreign Prince was an equally suitable occasion, and special confections were erected by Raffaello da Montelupo when Charles V. visited Rome and Florence: the Ponte Sant' Angelo was adorned with a number of clay statues modelled for the event. In fact the curious records which have been handed down show that, ephemeral as these decorations were, their preparation must have been very costly, for churches were adorned with new

façades, permanent structures were modified, and whole palace fronts were embellished with light fresco; in short, such events as the marriage of Cosmo de' Medici and Eleonora da Toledo in 1529, when Tribolo was decorator in chief, furnished an occasion for lavish prodigality little short of amazing.<sup>1</sup> Lath and plaster in their most exalted combination explain the scale of these ephemeralidæ, as the ease with which stucco could be modelled made it the best medium for the gay side of sculpture.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On this ephemeral sculpture see Giambulari's "Apparato de Feste," and one may compare it with a curious compilation of later date entitled "Collection des dessins des figures colossales . . . de Neige," Robiano, Antwerp, 1773.

<sup>2</sup> STUCCO.—Stucco, however, within its own sphere is a noble material—light, easily handled, quickly prepared, and with receptive surfaces of undoubted charm, but carrying responsibilities too often overlooked. Its employment dates back to remote periods, and the highly important reliefs at Cividale, apparently as early as the eighth century, derive a portion of their historical value from the fact that they are made of gesso or some such composition. Terracotta, though with many analogies, need not be here discussed (see page 139), except to add that the town museum of Modena has a little Deposition of Beggarelli's school, which is instructive as showing the technical method with which the stucco was used in combination with clay. It was not until the sixteenth century that stucco was used on a large scale, and even then certain parts of Italy neglected it altogether: Venice, for instance, where the few examples seem ill-suited to their environment, or at Rome where the material was ignored except in the Vatican Loggie, where it is employed with much success. On the whole the material was humble in extraction, and perhaps to that extent received less recognition from prominent sculptors and rich buyers, than its inherent qualities deserved; though it should be observed that stucco reliefs are mentioned in some of the Medici inventories. Northern artists never looked upon it as a stop-gap, and the Palazzo del Te at Mantua is decorated throughout with a scheme of stucco relief, which though

THE FOUNTAIN.—Turning to a more serious aspect, the fountain, we deal with a subject which in its essence must be secular. The holy-water stoup, the font, and the lavabo, which is often appropriately adorned with water motives such as Christ at the Well of Samaria or Christ washing the Disciples' Feet, are the ecclesiastical counterparts of the outdoor secular fountains, which however were erected to supply the water rather than to provide methods for its use. The civic fountain was a purely municipal affair, guarded with jealous care,<sup>1</sup> decorated as a rule with secular sculpture, and marking to some extent the public pride and spirit of the town. Early outdoor fountains like those at Siena, Perugia, and Viterbo are exceptional, and when they became common their decoration was

faulty is admittedly effective. The Teatro Farnese at Parma, and to a lesser extent the still more magnificent structure at Vicenza, show the dangerous ease and fluency with which the early Baroque could employ stucco as a permanent element of decoration; but one must acknowledge that the liberties taken with this material, relying upon its malleable and obliging nature, have led *plasmatori* to execute in stucco that which would not only be impossible, but which would look absurd in metal or stone.

<sup>1</sup> The critical importance of maintaining the purity and adequacy of supply to a community which at any moment might be besieged, is indicated by the severity of the punishment meted out to those who tampered with springs or aqueducts. Perugia was empowered to cut off the hand of any such culprit, and one could make a curious anthology of the Central Italian inscriptions publishing the penalties, which vary according to the standard of civilisation and the prevalence of private wells. By the seventeenth century the progress of water storage and the growing security of society, deflected punishment towards those selfish people who used the fountain without regard to others: at Assisi those caught bathing in the very handsome *fonti* were fined a scudo as well as suffering confiscation of their clothes.

almost entirely classical. At Bologna it is a Neptune by Gian Bologna, and in the Boboli Gardens the artist combined the maximum number of river and ocean scenes—we have the Nile, Ganges, and Euphrates, together with bas-reliefs of Diana bathing, Neptune in triumph, and Europa crossing the sea. The charming Bather at Petraja, Montorsoli's Neptune at Messina, Triboli's fountain at Villa di Castello, and Ammanati's at Florence (rather harshly criticised), all these are examples of a subject which was treated with much genuine feeling, and in which the sculptors at least may be commended for never being irrelevant. The Medici were very fond of fountains : they lived near hills where water was plentiful, and what was perhaps equally important, the water had a good head upon it. Fountains and waterfalls were possible. If one compares this stratigraphic fact with the physical formation of Venice, we see its decisive influence upon the sculptor. The restricted space of Venetian courtyards and *campi*, every inch of which had been rescued from the lagoon, together with the fact that the water would not rise, limited plastic activity to the adornment of well-heads. Extremely fine some of them are, the pair of *pozzi* in the Ducal Palace being of real dignity as well as masterpieces of bronze casting ; but the large fountain does not exist in the city, though one cannot help believing that the Romans would have pumped up sea-water rather than forgo the pleasures of glitter and splash. Rome

outvied Versailles in the variety and scale of her cascades—fountain is scarcely the fitting term, for it is only in out-of-the-way corners that one finds the genuine fountain, such as Landini's *Fontana de' Tartarughe* behind the *Palazzo Caetani*, which is extraordinarily effective in its modest way. Its construction is full of reserve, it is suited to the proportions of the little *piazza*, it shows a happy combination of marble and bronze *percé à jour* which gives it lightness, and the bronze boys are capital. So it has the merits of technical skill, of emplacement, and of material, while above all its size connotes convenience. It is a fountain from which water can be got easily and with promptness, hence it is convenient and homely, while the humour of the boys tickling the tortoises' tails enhances a virtue seldom met with in the street sculpture of Rome. It is a fountain to use, to drink from, and *à l'imprévu* to bathe in, a protest against all the vast and pompous rivalries which decorate the city:—*Aqua Felice* with its absurd and dripping statue of Moses; *Quattro-fontane*, all four of which are obviously in the way; Tritons and Dolphins, Ganges and Nile, sea-gods and river-gods, *Trevi* covering up a whole palace wall with artificial cascades and rockeries, and so on almost indefinitely. They are all too grandiloquent or else savour too freely of stage artifice. The play of the water satisfies the ear, and there is also much to please the eye, but the ideal fountain does more: it lets one drink in humility and peace.

None the less it must be acknowledged that these huge architectonic fountains gave opportunity to any number of students and apprentices to make their mark ; and in a smaller way the garden art, nymphs, classical deities, terraces, balustrades, grottoes, Tempietti—in fact the whole apparatus of the Italian pleasure ground, absorbed so much sculpture as to afford a concurrent remedy for over-production, while the cheapness of the materials usually employed encouraged the young sculptor towards ingenuity and experiment.

THE GROTESQUE.—Italian art, even when avowedly secular, shrank from the grotesque which Northern sculptors associated with their most devotional buildings. The old theory that the corbel, water-spout, and gargoyle represent the wood-demon and hobgoblin which the Church keeps outside her walls, but which she compels to do her service, is a little too pious to explain the prevalence of grotesque throughout Northern and Central Europe. The mind of the Gothic sculptor turned towards grotesque. It was an essential element in his scheme of composition as well as an incident in his method of decoration : we can neither adequately explain its presence in the North nor its absence in the South. The fact remains. Deformities there are in Italian art, for instance in the Groppoli reliefs at Barga, in some of Antelami's work ; even on the façade of Borgo San Donnino there are some scraps of bas-relief showing that involuted humanity so common in

Picardy or Brabant. But grotesque in Italy is of a less pungent character, and the examples here mentioned owe their quality to inferior education or sheer clumsiness of hand, differing wholly in status from the Northern gargoyles which so often proclaim the most consummate craftsmanship. According to Benvenuto Cellini, the very word grotesque is a neologism derived from grotto—classical *loggia* and arbours as one may suppose, adorned in what we should now call the Pompeian style; and it is probably true that the discovery of the Baths of Titus early in the sixteenth century gave a stimulus to this form of decoration. Further light will be thrown on the Italian use of the term in the contract where Pinturichio engaged to paint the roof of the Piccolomini Chapel in the manner “nowadays called grotesque.”<sup>1</sup> This ceiling offers a strange definition to Northern minds which recall the Stryge and similar figures upon the upper galleries of Notre Dame. Moreover caricature, the deliberate overloading of some particular feature with a view to ridicule, is equally rare in Italy. The executioner is made to look terrible, the Devil aggressive, and Judas sly; but caricature as such is rarely encountered, for it was seldom needed in an art which dispensed with grotesque. Perhaps there is intentional caricature upon the rather mean little reliefs of the twelfth-century Porta Romana at Milan. It is an historical

<sup>1</sup> “... *disegni che oggi chiamano grottesche.*” The document is printed in Milanesi, 1856, iii. 9.

252 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE  
scene of triumph over defeated foes, and any such record of a secular character is valuable in Italy.

THE HISTORICAL EPISODE.—The commemorative idea which appealed to Charlemagne, was chiefly carried on by Italian municipalities when desirous of recording some great event, by means of inscriptions, while the actual rulers seldom expected and never received the personal homage accorded to Shah, Mogul, and Basileus. Hence the regrettable rarity of such secular monuments. The Coronation of Henry VII. at Pisa, and the very fine example in the Bargello, only survive as fragments. The large relief at Monza Cathedral, dating from the late fourteenth century, is perfect so far as the central panel goes, but again has suffered greatly. The superb portrait of Charles of Anjou, the most important statue of the thirteenth century in Rome, has suffered like the remainder; in 1481 Sixtus IV. saved it from absolute ruin—*obrutus hic jacui saxis fumoque . . .* as the epigraph records. It is a pity that a truly regal monument of this importance should be hidden away in a dark corner of the Palazzo de' Conservatori. It is needless to dwell upon honorific statues, or upon those bas-reliefs on Papal tombs which are wholly secular in character, their influence upon sculpture having been inappreciable; neither can it be said that the battle scene ever occupied a prominent place in their sculpture. It demanded a special measure of skill and reserve, most difficult of attainment for the painter, since error could be more

easily detected and was less readily forgiven upon canvas. Costume, armour, and even portraiture, not to mention strategy, require almost documentary precision, the absence of which will rivet the spectator's interest upon some minor error of fact; and apart from risks of inaccuracy the costume model is usually necessary, and the lack of correspondence between the two is often so patent as to make battle scenes the most unreal and theatrical manifestations in graphic art. The best examples are those where the battle is made generic, or thrown into classical surroundings—Centaurs and Lapithæ, Trojan against Greek—or as in the two versions of the battle of Anghiari, where preparation for strife or its unexpected advent sufficed to illustrate military valour. Here, however, the theme ceases to be historical and becomes a crowd less or more picturesque, and few subjects require greater discernment and more considered composition.

THE CROWD.—The classical bas-relief of a crowd, such for instance as the huge *mélée* of Romans and Barbarians (in the Buoncompagni collection at Rome), combines due knowledge of detail with an absolutely topsy-turvy *macédoine* of humanity: its confusion does not suggest a crowd, but a medley of quarrelsome acrobats. Multiplication of figures is not enough to make a crowd. Amadeo, Briosco, and Vincenzo Danti, overcrowded their crowds, and in order to represent the heavenly host Fra Angelico simply made rows of shining

aureoles vanishing into the perspective. Niccolo Pisano's pulpits, which seem to offer restricted spaces for large subjects, would have been both more spacious and dramatic if the figures were less congested. The early artists were content that the crowd should be conventional : Charlemagne leading his army across the Alps is only attended by three men (north nave window Chartres), or else two pitchers suffice for the miracle at Cana of Galilee. Plurality was all that was required. When the later artists came to analyse the crowd and grasped its essential character, all its elements could be indicated with the living and dramatic forces which pervade a concourse of people. Donatello's reliefs in Sant'Antonio at Padua are probably the best proofs of his thoughtful and accurate observation. The essence of a crowd is that it pushes ; there is less crowding in a disciplined regiment than in a score of hot and jostling civilians. Moreover, Donatello saw that the edge of the crowd where people cannot see or hear, loses interest and turns away ; or else the crowd can be almost indefinitely enlarged by suggesting groups farther off, if needful beyond the spectator's vision. Much can be learned by studying the crowds as imagined and portrayed by Italian artists.

**GENRE.**—When one turns to the domestic side of Italian plastic art (putting aside such sculpture as was decorative or used purely to reinforce architecture), it must be acknowledged that the materials are very scanty. Domestic events are rarely found,

and the hunting-scene scarcely exists : agricultural life at one moment was rather a favourite subject,<sup>1</sup> but was quickly superseded, while the signs of the Zodiac and bas-reliefs showing trade processes are equally rare. It would moreover appear that the *minuteria* of plastic art—all the little trifles which would be made of wood, ivory, and ductile clays, including porcelain—were but little cultivated. *Genre* in sculpture like the small easel picture of domestic interiors, never acquired that impetus which gave it so much more than transient popularity elsewhere. In one branch alone, excluding casts and reproductions,<sup>2</sup> was plastic art within the reach of humble buyers,

<sup>1</sup> For instance early twelfth and thirteenth-century examples at Cremona Cathedral, Parma Baptistry, San Marco Venice : Tuscan and Umbrian examples are less common, and less precise in presenting details of agricultural life. Compared with the extraordinary wealth of these subjects in Northern countries, ranging from the miniatures in the Psalter Calendars to the large reliefs above cathedral doorways, Italian poverty is singularly marked ; and this is unfortunate since the social and industrial history handed down by such records is of a valuable nature.

<sup>2</sup> In Ghiberti's Commentary special reference is made to casts, and as they were versions of Northern statuary the passage is most important as indicating one source of Gothic influence. Vasari says that nearly every student in Florence possessed a cast of one of Pollaiuolo's bas-reliefs “... della quale n'e una impronta di gesso in Firenze appresso tutti gli artefici.” The will of the Siennese sculptor Neroccio (1500, in Milanesi, iii. No. 2) gives a schedule of what he possessed in wax, gesso, raw clay, *papier mâché*, and terra cotta. The value of these reproductions as educational agencies cannot be too highly gauged, and though their original modelling is often lost through over-painting, they were alike valuable as works of art and as sources of instruction. Nowadays hundreds of modern sophistications are being sold as originals.

namely the small bronze, the medal, and the plaquette. And small as they are there is little doubt that they exercised an appreciable influence upon bigger sculpture. The façade of the Certosa is adorned with any number of figured *tondi*, the origin of which must clearly be sought in medallic art. The revival of classical interests helped to create a whole school of plaquette makers, their chief homes being Venetian territory and Florence: Rome scarcely deigned to pay attention to so humble an enterprise. One has to differentiate between *variae lectiones* of plaquettes which were indefinitely multiplied, probably freely pirated as well. This aspect of the matter, involving somewhat delicate problems of paternity, need not further be referred to here, beyond observing that their extraordinary numbers, and the frequency with which they were imitated even from debased examples, show the well-deserved popularity earned by a scholarly art.<sup>1</sup>

ART OF THE MEDALLIST.—The circular plaquette of the Renaissance is called a medal, but the art

<sup>1</sup> Rather earlier than the era of the plaquette, the fashion of gems had been revived in a somewhat exaggerated form. The Medici in Florence, and Martin V. and Paul II. in Rome, may be credited with having been pioneers in this taste, which combines the maximum of cost with the minimum of effect. Paul II., whom M. Eugène Muntz considers the real restorer of glyptic art, is alleged to have offered to present a new bridge to the town of Toulouse in return for an antique cameo. The word cameo, by the way, is Italian, and there seems to be no classical word for it. The intaglio which can be used as a seal is at any rate an object of utility, whereas its embossed counterpart, though often carved with brilliant skill, is the preoccupation of vanity.

of the medallist originated long before in the realm of coinage. It would be interesting to calculate the number of Italian towns which had their own mints say from the year 1200 to 1500; to discept between the causes which made the coinage of Sicily and the south relatively so bad compared with their high standard during classical times; or to speculate upon the commanding positions obtained by Northern towns in medallic art. Coinage again need not be discussed except to observe that its double personality, alternately commercial and religious, was supplemented in the Renaissance by a third phase, that associated with the medal—social, commemorative, and as a rule secular. Occasionally a Biblical scene will be found, as on the *capo d'opera* of Vittore Pisano of Verona, but only as a secondary or verso aspect. The medallist had advantages which the designer of coins could not use: in the first place he escaped the uniformity of size, weight, and value inseparable from the minted coin; this gave him freedom, and freedom allowed him to model in high relief, which would not be justifiable for ordinary coins, as it would prevent their standing in piles. The medal of course had to be comparatively small, and this made the artist concentrate and purify his scene as much as possible. Being often authenticated by names and dates their historic value is enhanced. No doubt the period of brilliancy was rather short, for to tell the truth the art attracted clever men

because fashion demanded medals, just as at one time the Barbarian Emperors gave a faint impulse to a similar movement by the decision to retain Imperial effigies on their coinage. Moreover men associated with large marble sculpture used to work in this lowest of low relief—*stacciato*; Michelozzo made at least one medal, and it is probable that Amadeo executed one for Leonello d'Este. Ghiberti would have made a fine one; Michael Angelo's would have been the massive masterpiece of what is called a minor art. But it is a very charming art, personal in that you pay a compliment, make a present, or record some private or domestic incident: sometimes they are anticipatory, more often commemorative, and the appreciation of such a gift need not be measured by the intrinsic value of the metal employed.

THE SMALL BRONZE.—When overgrown the medal becomes the medallion, unsatisfactory as a rule because it is without the intimacy of its smaller counterpart, while failing to secure the importance of the smaller bronzes, a branch of art which attained immense proportions some fifty years after Antonio Pollaiuolo first brought the idea into prominence. The early Renaissance bronze is the most significant outcome of plastic art used for wholly decorative ends. Seldom does one find these figurines associated with monumental sculpture; but of course the term “small bronze” though accepted as definitive

is arbitrary, and one cannot well say where the small merges into medium or ends in being big. This classification, however, assumes them to be suited to table decoration, of a size that is to say consistent with the convenience and dignity of the Italian reception-room. There was certainly an immense output of purely decorative figures as well as inkstands, coffers, candlesticks, and small objects which were of a utilitarian character. By the end of the fifteenth century there was a regular trade in forgeries of antique medals,<sup>1</sup> and a hundred years later the bronzes of the fine Renaissance period were largely falsified (a process which has not yet been discontinued), though naturally Tanagra figures could not be copied in the Cinquecento. Fortuna's letter written to the Duke of Urbino in 1581 tells one a good deal about the internal economy of a successful *atelier*, and he describes how much Gian Bologna was assisted by his pupils in the big statues, while responsibility for the smaller ones was retained in the hands of the great master himself.

PLASTIC ART AS BASIS OF DECORATION.—These small bronzes acted as decorative backgrounds, foils to set off the bigger schemes, and as complements to some idea of domestic comfort and enjoyment. They are decorative, but not in

<sup>1</sup> There is a phrase in the Anonimo Morelliano (Bassano edition, 1800, p. 25) applied to some of these bronzes, *vengono dall' antico* which seems to indicate this practice.

themselves decoration as we understand it in the plastic sense, namely something structurally applied in order to embellish and enhance the larger qualities of sculpture and architecture. It would be quite possible but somewhat tedious, to trace the evolution of plastic decoration in Italian sculpture, though this is the only branch of art where real hiatus and contradiction will be encountered. There was no particular school, no code of recognised rules (although they exist), and the artist maintained a liberty of treatment consistent with the endless varieties of decoration, suggested by the changing conditions of size, space, material, distance, and emplacement. Early decoration, however, being of a somewhat tentative character does not attract much attention, decoration that is to say of a truly plastic nature as opposed to the other styles, mosaic or *intarsia*, which attained a high standard of excellence long before the human figure could be modelled with any degree of justice. This feature is common to primitive art. The paradox of the Book of Kells lies in the brilliant refinement and linear accuracy of the mazes of ophiomorphic interlacings, contrasted with the simian shape of its manhood. Geometry however was a narrow base upon which to build. Every art freed itself from these labyrinths as early as possible, although it often took them a long time to find a substitute. Niccolo Pisano, and indeed Gothic sculptors as late as the earlier tombs of the Scaligers, scarcely acknowledged

decoration as a distinct entity, and largely confined themselves to embellishing the architectural members—the legitimate form of adornment which from the classical egg and dart, through Norman and Romanesque moulding, found a logical issue in the Gothic crotchet or pinnacle. Decoration must of course be subordinate, should always continue as handmaiden to whichever art may be its mistress ; but it is entitled to a modest personality of its own, and should not be completely merged, otherwise it becomes detail instead of ornament. Conflicting ideas struggled for mastery during the fourteenth century, and by the middle of the fifteenth, decoration had established its proper status. The work of art, whether in sculpture, painting, or architecture, was distinguished by a discretion and happiness of decoration which was not only pleasing and tactful in itself, but which contributed much to the *tout ensemble*. But with the advent of humanism, decoration began to claim a share in the larger ideas, and self-aggrandisement set in. Donatello blamed Paolo Uccello for his perspective, which threatened to oust the essentials : " You are exchanging the certain for the uncertain," he said ; and in other arts they began to lose mass in detail. The Annunciation, once tranquil and secluded, became a palace scene. The Adoration of the Magi, so heartfelt in the early reliefs, becomes trite and pompous when the Eastern Kings are transformed into Western Emperors.

Opulence with all its self-complacency obliterates the true note even more completely in sculpture than upon canvas. If one examines the work of a typical man like Simone Mosca, an artist it should be said of real skill and feeling, one cannot help being struck, for example in the Altar of Santa Maria della Pace, Rome (1524), with the fact that the architect of this monument has lost control over the decoration : the two hands of the sculptor no longer co-operate, and the decoration does not conform to that which it is intended to beautify. Indeed the decoration does more than intrigue against the structure, it is an invader ; it distracts attention, distorts the balance, and in short disturbs all harmony. At the same time the carving of all this *bric-à-brac* is full of delights. One is offered an unlimited choice of prettinesses, and one spends many minutes wondering which scrap deserves most admiration.

MICHAEL ANGELO'S SCHEME OF DECORATION.—

At this very time Michael Angelo was at work upon the Medici tombs in San Lorenzo, the culminating masterpiece of Italian sculpture ; full of lessons in a hundred great problems, not least in the wisdom of its decoration. To Michael Angelo, as has already been indicated, the central theme was humanity. He only made one decorative work in his life, a candlestick ; but his ideals did not exclude a passionate love of justice towards decoration, although he viewed it from an aspect of austerity. There is no arabesque,

no irrelevance; he was bold enough to let the cold marble tell its restrained story. With perfect balance and harmony, the play of flat surfaces enclosed by simple pilasters and surmounted by the most decorous frieze, provides at the same moment detail and mass, subject and adornment. The mass decorates itself, *simplex munditiis*, with even greater address than do the monuments of Egypt, where script replaced the graceful florescences of later times. Michael Angelo, however, marks an interlude, and although his influence was felt and respected, the temptation to intensify emotions fostered a recurrence to the expatiating style of decoration. His firmness and decision were abandoned: dainty details were indefinitely multiplied. External sculpture and outer walls of buildings were smothered with all sorts of enrichments which expressed nothing in particular, and which erred in being so thin and perishable as to wear out long before that which they were meant to adorn. After all, one requirement of decoration is durability, equivalent less or more to that which it ostensibly pretends to complete. This quality was frequently lacking, while the claims of conformity were openly disregarded. Vigarni who put the Rape of Europa on to the episcopal throne in Burgos Cathedral, and Filarete who gave some prominence to Leda on the bronze doors of St. Peter's, found many copyists who helped to bring about a real decadence by divorcing decoration from relevance

and congruity.<sup>1</sup> Whimsical, coquettish, essentially popular, and, as we may suppose, extraordinarily cheap, superficial decoration became independent and self-supporting : Bibbiena elevated flippancy to the status of a Fine Art.

GHIBERTI.—It should, however, be added that success was achieved. If we examine the detail of all this detail, it will be admitted that the modelling and treatment are masterly, and most especially where nature rather than linear or architectonic decoration is concerned. To Ghiberti nature and art were interwoven, somewhat as outlined in the famous apothegm of the "Religio Medici": "Nature is not at variance with art nor art with nature, they being both servants of His providence. Art is the perfection of nature. Were the world now as it was on the Sixth Day there were yet a chaos: nature hath made one world, and art another. In brief, all things are artificial, for nature is the art of God." And where nature was concerned they seem to have tried to avoid the illusions of classic naturalism—birds being deceived by the fruit of

<sup>1</sup> Anything could be decoratively handled by these astonishing people. To quote a few large-scale examples, the tomb at Reggio d'Emilia of Cherubino Sforzani, alleged to have invented the hour-glass, consists of a colossal hour-glass six feet high; it is a counterpart to Fossa's tomb, of which the ruling feature is a marble amphora of the same proportions. The Stanga tomb in Sant'Agata, Cremona, is in effect a doorway; Plazio's monument in Sant'Agostino is like a chimney-piece, while at San Cassiano, Imola, there are two tombs of the Alidosi family which really *are* chimney-pieces. The Sfondrato tomb in Cremona Cathedral is curiously Georgian in style.

Zeuxis, who in turn was deceived by the curtain of Parrhasius, and similar stories which reflect prevailing standards of merit. Copying *quād* copying with the objective of pure imitation, the means rather than the end of art, was soon discredited by the Italian sculptor, so much so that in some cases landscape and all its accessories were forsaken. Jacopo della Quercia scarcely indicates the Garden of Eden upon the reliefs at San Petronio; Andrea della Robbia very largely, and Michael Angelo almost entirely, were oblivious of nature and the warmth it could infuse to plastic art. No doubt it was difficult to vitalise landscape without the aid of colour, which supplies aerial perspective and values; but Ghiberti succeeded. Landscape as such is less frequently used than one might expect, and although it is natural that the sea, which played so prominent a part in the commerce and politics of Genoa, Venice, and Pisa, should from technical difficulties be rarely employed in sculpture, yet it is a matter of surprise that painters should have shown so little of the Dutch attachment to home surroundings, and to one of the agencies of their national greatness. One might almost say that Ghiberti did more for landscape painters than for sculpture. Sir Joshua Reynolds blamed one of the Baptistry panels because a tree casts its shadow on a cloud; but with all its faults, and they are not few (for a door requires strength rather than embroidery), this graphic phase of plastic

art has never before or since so nearly approached perfection : there is grandeur in Ghiberti's infinitesimals.

FLORA AND FAUNA.—Moreover he set up a standard in Flora and Fauna which long retained vitality. The borders which surround his bronze gates show how Ghiberti and his son Vettorio grasped all the natural history and structure of every plant they introduced. Here flora is made much of for its own inherent tenderness and charm, never being treated as a conventional foliage, still less like the "political plants," as Mrs. Strong calls them—the lotus in Egypt, the acanthus in Greece, the laurels of Imperial Rome, or the fleur-de-lys of France. Ghiberti, Verrochio, and in a more generalised manner Luca della Robbia, raised flowers and foliage from the status of conventions, to become essentials in art decoration, even more completely than botany was raised to a science by Leonardo da Vinci. In the animal world there were both greater necessity and larger sphere for fancy. Animals as such could not be excluded from numerous themes such as the evangelistic symbols, the history of the Ark, or the equestrian statue. Moreover there was a long tradition originating in the half-imaginary animals of old—the centaur, the Etruscan chimæra, and the wolf of Romulus, subsequently reanimated in mediæval bestiaries and then fostered by the Franciscan love of nature. But Italy did not allow humanity to play a subordinate part ; so

the incomparable skill of the Babylonian reliefs was never surpassed in Italy, or indeed in the Western world either. Where indigenous fauna could appropriately be introduced, taking again Ghiberti as the exemplar, ranging from the nobler types of deer, wild-boar, and oxen, down to the most humble—frogs, lizards, and little birds, all were studied with acute observation, articulated with complete assurance, and introduced on to the bas-relief with real sympathy. The greater beasts of prey offered more scope to imaginative minds, and the lion in Romanesque architecture was normally used to bear the burden of the pillars of the church porch. Northern towns were specially fond of external friezes of half-fabulous beasts, Pavia having quite a weakness for this style of decoration. Tacca's wild-boar at Florence should be mentioned as one of the rare instances where an animal is made the subject of an imposing statue—a rarity contrasted with whole roomfuls of classical figures of wild and domestic animals. On the late bronze gates of Pisa Cathedral will be found really good specimens of exotic animals, including the rhinoceros, while the elephant, employed in a heraldic sense at Rimini, became in the hands of Bernini and later men the subject of some rather impressive things: outside the Minerva at Rome, at Catania, and beside Santa Corona at Vicenza, the elephant patiently carrying some obelisk or pyramid is a solemn and almost pathetic figure.

HERALDRY.—The municipal badge or symbol offered many chances to local stonemasons, and the lion of Venice, the griffin of Perugia, the Siennese wolf, and the horse of Arezzo were repeated with infinite variety for several hundred years: this group, however, borders upon heraldic art, to which Italians never paid the cultus it received in the North, though from a decorative point of view, and as a symbolic record of bygone prowess, it was always held to confer a certain distinction upon a palace or tomb, and claimed a still wider popularity if one may trust Sacchetti's gibe that "nowadays every beggar wants a coat-of-arms."<sup>1</sup> Its bearing upon Italian sculpture is small. Donatello made a very grand shield for the Martelli family, and there is a shield or two of almost German splendour in the Church of the Knights of Malta at Rome, the outcome perhaps of the Cosmatesque tradition, always partial to the escutcheon. Heraldry, however, is not an Italian art; in some towns it is impossible to find a shield tricked with accuracy or designed in the somewhat aggressive tone needful for a fine achievement. Piles of weapons and armour, presenting a deeper relief and more scope for undercutting, at one moment attracted the attention of the decorative sculptor in the sixteenth century. The Palazzo Bentivoglio at Ferrara is a grandiloquent specimen of this; but it was unreal and never enjoyed the throbbing interest attached

<sup>1</sup> "Novelle," No. 63.

to the heraldry of countries where the romances of chivalry had become historical facts. Heraldry, however, with suitable disposition upon a palace front was useful to the architect, while the note of colour it could introduce upon a tomb encouraged sculptors to save it from oblivion. One would imagine that this function alone might have brought it into larger use, though the polychromacy derived from a whole school of plastic art, Della Robbia ware as it is termed, offered a less formal substitute. Though a Tuscan art, this enamelled terracotta, by virtue of its cheapness and from the fact that the artists could travel about and use the local raw material, was diffused all over Central Italy. It scarcely reached Rome, and when it journeyed far north all its homeliness and spontaneity were lost: its very cheapness seems to have depreciated its sterling qualities. Luca and Andrea between them produced a larger number of really good things than most of their contemporaries, but their art died out. There is no reason to suppose that the secret processes of manufacture perished and could not be revived: the probability is that a more extended form of polychromacy, applicable without restriction to wall space as well as to sculpture itself, came into vogue, and put an end to an art which had only flourished about a hundred years.

**POLYCHROMACY.**—Polychromacy is of course an adjunct of all primitive sculpture. Even in our

own day signs of gilding could still be detected on Niccolo Pisano's pulpits, and indeed it is no longer necessary to prove that, in Renaissance as well as in classical times, colour was regularly added to sculpture as a form of decoration.<sup>1</sup> The employment of mosaic was a more suitable method of adding colour, and Donatello not only used it as background for his Cantoria (fig. 53), but at Padua he employed maiolica in connection with his great altar. At Pavia architects constantly inserted plaques of faience into the church façades, and in Rome one or two bell-towers which have escaped restoration still preserve these bright discs. Rome however had much more ambitious schemes of colour : marble was the medium, not restricted to black, the fitting colour according to Alberti for statues of the Deity in that it suggests incomprehensibility, but varying in texture and surface as well as in hue. The history of marble in Rome is the history of a wholly bad influence upon the creative spirit of decoration : one feels that there is no adequate excuse for it, no such explanation,

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps, however, it may be worth while pointing out that the nature of this coloration has in certain cases been preserved. Vettorio Ghiberti's sketch-book in the Bibl. Naz. at Florence gives Donatello's tomb of John XXIII. (folio 70a) coloured with a scheme which one must confess is pleasing, and bearing a distinct analogy to the Stefaneschi tomb at Rome (fig. 95), which, with the Apostles on the rood-screen of San Zeno at Verona, supplies one of the rare examples of successful polychromacy. A painting in the Parma Gallery (No. XIX. of a long series from the life of St. Peter Martyr) shows Balduccio's shrine in Sant' Eustorgio, Milan, as coloured in the fifteenth century.

for instance, as that which accounts for some of the windows in Orvieto Cathedral being made of alabaster. It is not nature unadorned, but fantastic combinations of natural products gathered together from every corner of the earth, planed, squared, and cut into a hundred geometrical patterns, and it will be admitted often enough forming very singular effects. But marble imposed itself with too much severity; it haunted some men. The Pope who destroyed St. Peter's took scrupulous care to preserve the pavement. Rome in fact came to depend upon her marbles, measured her wealth in them, and to this day one of the chief prides of the city seems to rest upon the rarity and brilliance of these incrustations. Tombs and statuary seemed of less account than first-class porphyry or cippolino, and yet it is not clear, why, in setting so much store by these colour effects indoors, the external façades are without exception monochrome.<sup>1</sup>

Michael Angelo never coloured his statues. He was too great a painter to waste colour upon stone, too great a sculptor to sacrifice the sober shadows cast by tangibility. Form sufficed, and like the form he kept his material pure. He realised the crucial law of decoration, and refusing to overcharge with details, he likewise disdained the help of colour, which would have veiled his

<sup>1</sup> In 1828 Faustino Corsi published his "Trattato," giving a *catalogue raisonné* of every scrap of structural marble in the city of Rome, upwards of 7,000 items being described.

modelling with a surface of paint—a bad combination of two arts instead of unchallenged supremacy in one. He laid down the ethics of decoration, and set an example which can never be followed in its integrity until his equal is born to some new Renaissance. *Usque quo Domine?*

## CHAPTER VIII

### CLASSICAL THOUGHT

RELATIVE SCARCITY OF CLASSICAL STATUARY.—The survival of classical thought, the survival of classical monuments, and their respective influence upon the development of Italian sculpture present intricate problems, some of them so frankly insoluble that the speculative nature of inductions must be admitted at the outset. In the first place, without attempting any exact definition of the word “classical” so recklessly applied in this connection, it would be well to point out its immense scope. No discrimination used to be shown between countries and centuries: nowadays it is necessary to specify much more closely. The Italian Renaissance grouped all antique art together, whether Greek or Roman, Imperial or Republican, under one broad category, and it was the later types which contributed most largely to the enthusiasm of the Renaissance. These types consisted chiefly of political rather than mythological episodes, and it is probable that the quantity of original monuments which survived was relatively small. Great numbers had been

destroyed owing to their pagan extraction, St. Gregory for example ordering many to be thrown into the Tiber. Later on fragments were considered of so little account as to be used for structural purposes or for making lime;<sup>1</sup> scores of them, according to Procopius, were thrown down from the Mole of Hadrian on to the heads of the besieging Goths ; and it need hardly be said that few if any specimens of Roman painting can have been preserved. Moreover literary appreciation and criticism is not only rare, but when met with is so indeterminate as to support the view that actual monuments were very uncommon. Ghiberti assumed that the Hermaphrodite found at Rome had been concealed in order to preserve it from destruction, for it never occurred to him that a whole world lay hidden beneath the rubbish and detritus of what was then the modern city. Raffaello da Montelupo a hundred years later, long after the mania for excavation had set in, boasted that he had actually made drawings of every single antiquity in Rome, while Sabba del Castiglione, one of the shrewdest specimens of the Renaissance connoisseur, complained that the rarity of good antiquities drove him and his friends to the purchase of contemporary sculpture. The real fact is that whatever could be included in the vague term Classical art, had become a myth centuries before it won abstract respect ; and it

<sup>1</sup> Pirro Ligorio in the Bodleian Codex quoted the most approved recipe for this, showing how long this lack of appreciation continued.

retained an impersonal reputation well into the fifteenth century, quite apart from æsthetic appreciation. Nothing proves this more succinctly than the curious guide-books dating back to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the *Mirabilia* and so forth, which attach all kinds of traditional and patriotic interpretations to the buildings they describe ; but critical knowledge of art and its history had perished, and the terms of mythology were quite unfamiliar. Ghiberti did not recognise Apollo and Marsyas, while the compiler of the catalogue of Paul the Second's collection seems to have been ignorant of the whole of classical nomenclature : Hercules is one of the few deities he could recognise, together with one or two members of the Imperial house. And indeed there is no occasion for surprise that this knowledge had died out. San Bernardino and Sixtus IV. record their efforts to master Latin, which had ceased to be a living tongue, and Petrarch said that in his day there were scarcely ten people in Italy who understood Greek. Petrarch himself could not transcribe an inscription and assumed the Trajan Column to be the tomb of that emperor. Dante in an earlier generation of poets seems to have been utterly oblivious to the existence of ancient art—even his observant eye which recorded so many things enshrined in the “Divine Comedy,” never noted the great amphitheatres of Arles, Verona, and Rome. It is probable that in his day these buildings, which

were half-buried in *débris*, choked with vegetation, inhabited by squatters at one end and used as stone quarries at the other, recalled none of the Imperial grandeur now emanating from the Colosseum. Even Poggio Bracciolini dismally lamented that he could scarcely detect anything which reminded him of the bygone city of Rome.

LITERARY AND SENTIMENTAL INFLUENCES.—

But the Myth flourished all the more luxuriantly because it could neither be analysed nor compared with the prototypes from which it was derived. In literature classical influences undoubtedly acted as a living force. Boccaccio's foundation of the professorship of Greek started a literary intercourse with the Near East which brought over experts, collated old texts, transcribed new ones, and culminated seventy years later in the westward migration of scholarship after the fall of Constantinople. Classical influence on scholastic as opposed to the more literary branches of learning, had however long been exercised in the schools of politics and jurisprudence, where the axiom of Aristotle was omnipotent, and held sway with some of the severity which the early treatises of Mount Athos wielded over Byzantine art. By the end of the fifteenth century classical literature, supplemented by enthusiastic collectors who spent time and fortune upon exhuming relics of ancient sculpture, established a sort of conventional "tone" which

was immediately reflected in the current writing of the day, enriching the *lingua volgare* itself and giving a freedom of phrase and expression modelled upon ripe classical authorship. It has been questioned if the new learning improved Italian prose. So far as sculpture is concerned, putting aside the traditional coin-types, classical influences still remained at their mythical or sentimental stage. The discovery of the Laocoön in 1506 excited the literati much more than it affected the sculptor: it was not until a much later date that the antique statue really became a model—let us say not much before 1583, when the Niobe group was dug up—and even then it will be seen that the Italian sculptor seldom became a copyist and never surrendered the essentially national features of his art. Thus it comes about that what were called the classical lessons of the Renaissance, however much they may have modified literary tastes, failed to impose more than a veneer upon plastic art, interesting and in some cases significant, but without fundamental or revolutionary effects.

CONTINUITY OF CLASSICAL TRADITION.—Survivals of classical tradition will indeed be found, but they are distinct from revivals, and point to the continuity of old style much more than to the concoction of new formulæ. Drapery in plastic art, and mouldings in architectonic decoration, are the most obvious signs of this continuity, while to a certain extent the tendency to keep

human figures stumpy in stature and rather prominent in the head, can still be detected in the archaic and uncouth reliefs of the thirteenth century. These characteristics sprang directly from the sarcophagi, many of which had been adapted to Christian burial and had thus escaped the hostility to which more valuable works were subjected. And in any case it must be remembered that the classical statue, as mediævalism knew it, was in the vast majority of cases the work of the Imperial decadence, lacking the solid attributes of the good period of Roman art and of course wholly without the noble qualities of the finest Greek sculpture. Greek art as such was always rare ; and it is interesting that Venice, with all her passion for importing Eastern loot, should have limited her energies to collecting fine marbles, porphyry, and so forth, though during the period of her maritime supremacy she could always have secured masterpieces of sculpture. There is plenty of Greek art at Venice, but it comes from Italianised workshops ; and the classical art with which Dante's Italy was familiar was likewise the final growth of a sculpture already old when deprecated on one side by Christian sentiment, mutilated on the other by barbarian vandalism, and subjected for a thousand years to the equally dangerous foes of apathy, exposure, and neglect. Tradition however survived in drapery, in form, and to some extent in the massed compositions of Niccolo Pisano's pulpits ;

while Frederick II. very nearly succeeded by arbitrary theories of political aggrandisement, in creating a Capuan school imbued with the ideas of the late Empire. His effort failed as was inevitable, for artificial atavisms are unhealthy; and this is not surprising when one sees how slowly the spontaneous ideas of the Renaissance permeated the minds of people whose art was too living and progressive to welcome fresh classical ideals. Certain types introduced into classical Rome from the East were readily accepted by Christianity and handed down with the added imprimatur of ecclesiastical approval. Jordan the River God appears on the mosaics of Ravenna, and Rome (very much as the Nile or Tiber) was personified; Hercules was the recognised type of heroism, Mercury of speed. The arts and the sciences, the abstract ideas of the virtues, mourners and attendant genii, the Cupid who became a far more lovable entity called the *amorino*, all provided links between the old and new dispensations, grafting one to the other and giving to the modern art the semblance of being largely indebted to the primitive mythology.

CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY.—Here again it is necessary to distinguish between a consistent evolution and some abrupt reintroduction of foreign or obsolete ideas. By the end of the fifteenth century the subject-matter was certainly drawn from classical mythology to a far greater extent than had been the case a hundred years

before ; but the sculptor's mind remained Italian : his modelling preserved all its native vivacity, and the form in which he clothed his figures was Umbrian, Tuscan, Milanese—anything rather than Corinthian or Imperial. While he may have studied the details of classical art—and he often did so almost unconsciously—the underlying principles were never accepted until a few men late in the sixteenth century seem for a moment to have penetrated into the heart of the movement. Judging from Ghiberti's Commentary one would say that he was an enthusiastic admirer of classical lore. He speaks of Andrea Pisano as living in the 410th Olympiad, and he describes two or three old statues with so much eloquence as to suggest that they were in themselves rarities. But when one comes to examine his work it is obvious that he was uninfluenced by the theories so cogently advanced, and in point of fact Ghiberti is one of the few men who refrained from employing mythological subjects. Again, Pollaiuolo's tomb of Sixtus IV. (1493) shows the same thing inversely. A casual glance at its subject-matter leads one to classify it as a signal tribute to classical predilections. Certainly the reliefs are non-Christian, but the tomb is pure Italian Renaissance, and one of its most noble achievements ; separated in every essential from classical art, Greek or Roman, and furthermore notable as indicating how little Pollaiuolo's mind and creative sense had been

modified by the classical whims of his patrons. Pope Sixtus himself and his nephew Julius II., who commissioned the sculptor, were on the whole less disposed to tolerate Paganism in fine art than in literature; but the hierarchy did not carry its views to any unreasonable length, allowing considerable latitude to men like Filarete, while Pinturichio enjoyed complete freedom in the Vatican Palace. The Italian patron seems as a rule to have placed little restraint upon the sculptor's subject, still less upon its treatment, and there being no canon of taste to limit his imagination, the sixteenth century seemed to expand in all directions. But certain ideas based upon an interpretation of classical art came to be formulated. The increasing manifestations of culture and the activity of rich and fastidious collectors gave a new stimulus to a particular form of sculpture. Except in a few very obvious emblems classical mythology had practically lain dormant for centuries: there had always been a latent undercurrent of sympathy with the old religions of the country, even to the extent of a dim popular conviction that one day the reign of Madre Natura would be reinaugurated; and when owing to a variety of circumstances old traditions were revived, the classical scenes and episodes assumed a sudden and at times preponderating prominence. The wisest men among sculptors were eclectic, contenting themselves with applying a few profitable lessons drawn

from antique models as opposed to more vague inductions from classical texts. These men were in the majority. Some of the later artists were content to be as they thought classical in spirit as well as in form, and these men were exceptional. In estimating the active influence of classical taste it should be noted that the garden art demanded thousands of decorative figures which were often avowed copies of late antique models—imposed to that extent upon the sculptor, and not necessarily reflecting any pronounced bias towards the reincarnation of Imperial types. In whatever direction we look we find that classicism was potent in the unessentials alone, which, though they may be but byways, illustrate the tendency of the times. Part of their worship was clearly founded upon archæological sympathies, together with the sentiment of affection aroused when something is discovered or dug up, rescued so to speak from oblivion, and prized accordingly: furthermore the literary aspects of the classical world were bound to make their impression upon art, indeed it would have been paradoxical had they remained unrelated. The paintings of the Villa Farnesina are as truly classical in subject-matter as anything that ever existed under Titus or Caracalla, but there the resemblance ends, for apart from the fact that antique painting was too frail in calibre to survive as model, there was no occasion for Raphael to affect the pedantry of copying externals.

CLASSICAL REMINISCENCES.—Again, the High Renaissance paid its compliment to antiquity in all its classical allusions, in the phraseology of epitaphs, in the conceit of announcing the age of the deceased by the approved formula, *vixit annos . . . menses . . . dies*; and similar reminiscences (they are no more) are encountered at every turn. Most illuminating of all was the long-established practice of comparing the sculptor to Praxiteles or Phidias, artists with whose work Italy has been unacquainted until recent times; but as they were the great men of antiquity whose fame was handed down through long ages, the most acceptable flattery accordingly took the form of comparison with men whose art and aspirations were wholly dissimilar from their own.<sup>1</sup> Nomenclature was a harmless if

<sup>1</sup> Gori observes that Donatello set himself to the actual imitation of antique statuary ("Dactyliotheca Smithiana," 1768, II. cxxvi.), while Baldinucci speaks of the same sculptor as "*emulando mirabilmente la perfezione degli antichissimi scultori greci*" (Ed. 1768, p. 74). Sabba da Castiglione compares him with Praxiteles and Phidias (Ricordi, 1554, No. 109), Flavius Blondius with Zeuxis and Heraclætus ("Italia Illustrata," Bâle, 1531, p. 305). Ugolino compared Verrochio to Lysippus, Filelfo likened Filarete to three of the greatest Greek artists including "Copas": Isaiah of Pisa is placed on an equality with Polyclites, and Pius II. considered the façade of Orvieto Cathedral equal to the work of Praxiteles (Muntz, i. 90, 255, 100). The Quirinal horses were always believed to be masterpieces of early Greek art. There are allusions to Praxiteles, the artist with whom comparison was most frequently made, upon the monument of Martin V. in Milan Cathedral by Jacobino da Tradate, on Prospero Clementi's tomb of Prati at Parma, and on the St. Bartholomew by Marco d'Agrate (fig. 73). Many other examples could be accumulated. It is obvious that these compliments were based on a complete misapprehension, analogous to Voltaire's

somewhat superficial amusement: even so robust a patriot as Colleone named his daughters Cassandra and Medea, though perhaps there was a note of aggression in the insistence of Sigismondo Malatesta that the Church of San Francesco at Rimini was a Templum to the honour of Isotta. The dependance of late art upon some fashionable element of classicism is perhaps best shown in the great landscape painters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Poussin, Claude Lorrain, or Salvator Rosa, whose wonderful landscapes earned a literary prestige by being labelled with classical names and identified by subordinate classical themes; and all this in spite of the fact that so far as we know landscape painting found but a small place in classical art. Ruysdael and Hobbema, and then our early British school, emancipated landscape from this tyranny,—a huge convention which cannot be actually charged with injury to painting or sculpture, but which none the less must have acted as a constant hindrance. The classicism which was founded on the assumption that standards of taste cannot vary or progress, which holds that the age of the Cæsars marked an apogee towards which

transcendent error that the glory of Italian artists lay in their approximation towards Greek models ("Histoire Universelle," ch. 121). The explanation is throughout to be found in the literary affinities of early writers and epigraphists, who introduced these classical similes in a wholly arbitrary fashion—a convention which has been tacitly accepted by critical authors of relatively modern times.

all ambitions should be directed, active as it was, thoroughgoing and perhaps not insincere, was fundamentally a failure.

CLASSICISM.—Symmetry, the ideal of classicism, was lauded—the whole of Alberti's treatise being based upon its virtue; but when the sculptor set to work he found it unfitted for religious or humanistic scenes. One cannot revivify faded standards of taste.<sup>1</sup> In the Preface to *Bajazet*

<sup>1</sup> ATAVISM.—Here and there one finds atavisms, bits of sculpture which embody forms and ideas long since superseded. It would be imprudent to generalise from them since in some cases they are freaks, such for example as the fourteenth-century tomb in the porch of Santa Francesca Romana at Rome, where an Etruscan projection to the figures has been introduced, whether from inexperience or bravado one cannot say. Again, the adaptation of new pieces to old works, or the reproduction of old designs, is apt to mislead as regards dates. The Cyprus wood doors of Santa Sabina (fig. 16), assuredly amongst the most puzzling monuments of Rome, are frequently attributed to the fifth century, when the church with its curiously Eastern touches was founded. It would appear that, though the panels on the doors were copied from ivories of an extremely early date, much of the actual workmanship cannot be anterior to the twelfth century; in this case, however, it is the designs which are all-important, and they hold an almost unique position. It is natural that atavisms as distinct from the survival of classical form should be best seen in places remote from the more influential centres of thought: these provincialisms show how the sculptor would return to the *patois* of his childhood, and it is seldom that such works are sufficiently authenticated to place them in their proper order of chronology. Thus a figure of St. Sebastian in the Museum of Reggio has all the external appearance of archaic Greek art—at the same time lithe and rigid, with the glazed eyeballs and curly ringlets of the year 450; but it is the work of some local *plasmatore* of the fifteenth century and inexplicable. The lunette of the central porch of Assisi Cathedral, a Madonna beside Christ as a young man and St. Rufinus, is more modern by two hundred years than it looks; while the altar-frontal of 1480 in San Biagio Cremona, and the black marble relief in Santa Catarina Genoa, 1488, are Giottesque works of Renaissance sculptors.

Racine describes his anxiety to be true to nature and ethnography : “*La principale chose à quoi je me suis attaché c'a été de ne rien changer ni aux mœurs ni aux coutumes de la nation (Turque)*”—but every one of his characters reflects Louis Quatorze. How much more hopeless was the task of reviving ideals which had decayed centuries before, but were unconsciously fructifying the imagination of subsequent generations. The Myth remained. One sees it in the toga of Dr. Johnson in St. Paul’s Cathedral, and nothing but convention would have diligently pieced together the fragments of marble, over a hundred of them, which now compose the famous statuette of Venus in the Maison Carrée at Nîmes—a second-class work but classical and as such sacrosanct. While recreating a whole world of classical allusions, episodes, and mythology, Italian sculpture remained loyal to the basal fabric of her own traditions and nationality ; however sympathetic, the late Renaissance never imitated the listless or sexless countenances, still less their immobility, for the progress of movement had attained greater perfection than at the best period of antique art as praised by Cicero.

OPULENCE.—Sculpture, however, did suffer from the opulence which was one outcome of these classical enthusiasms, and it was likewise injured by the vandalism which again sprang from undiscriminating admiration of everything that could plume itself on antiquity. Opulence marks the

fatigue of a decadent art as much as the ostentation of primitive races. In Homer's description of the gardens of Alcinous it is the gold of the statues, not their plastic qualities, to which attention is directed : it is to the number of attendant slaves, to quantities and values, to the precious structure of the Temple at Jerusalem, to the gold and ivory prodigies of Athenian art, that popular favour ascribed merits which were by no means inherent in the costly materials themselves. Barbarian luxury had to end in dispersion and loot ; but when a sense of security was established, justified at least by the improbability of invasion by ignorant or savage tribes, affluence and comfort naturally stimulated the production of beautiful things, simple at first, but with an ultimate tendency to exaggeration. No Southern country was less susceptible than Italy to this temptation to smother art in opulence of material. Marble certainly was treated much as if rare and unadorned substances could meet every requirement, while stucco, a very cheap composition, was abused with prodigality. The Italians, however, were far too sane in this respect, one might almost say too phlegmatic, to succumb to anything so near to vulgarity. But the vandalism from which every art in Italy suffered in turn, is hard to explain except upon the paradoxical thesis that the nation which most excelled in creative art, ill appreciated the fruits of bygone genius.

VANDALISM.—Much no doubt had to be destroyed, and many buildings were insufficient in size or stability to be worth preserving. Leon Battista Alberti writing in 1452 makes two remarks which perhaps may be somewhat overdrawn, but which are grounded upon fact. He says in the first place that he had seen 2,500 churches in Rome of which at least half were in ruins, and he adds that in his youth (he was born about 1400) he had seen many towns almost entirely made of wood which forty or fifty years later were rebuilt in stone.<sup>1</sup> It resembles the picture of Rome drawn by Gregorovius after the conclusion of the exile at Avignon—the city being in fact a mass of ruins, the streets and even the churches being pastured by cattle, while the population had sunk to 20,000 souls. The description conveyed by the brief issued by Martin V. in 1425 is perhaps still more melancholy, since after dwelling upon the unspeakable filth and squalor, and upon the neglect of elementary sanitary precautions, he indicates the danger to life and limb which threatened society some sixty years after the return of the Papal Court. Ten years later St. Peter's was invaded by the mob who stripped the pontifical throne of the Founder. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that even many years later Aretino should have preferred the grandeur and dignity of Venice. But if Rome was poor in means she was also poor in resource

<sup>1</sup> "De Re ædificatoria," folio, Paris, 1553, 165.

and invention. It is not to be expected that the Cosmati could have developed a great school of sculpture during the political catastrophe which followed so closely upon some of their best works ; but after the re-establishment of the Papal Government, though still a poor city compared with Florence, Rome seemed to overlook the openings afforded by the cheaper forms of sculpture—clay, terracotta, or enamelled wares : when afterwards wealthy, she was likewise indifferent to bronzes, plaquettes, busts, and statuettes, which were being turned out in thousands by Tuscan and Milanese artists. Rome in fact was partial and callous in her patronage. Circumstances drew the best sculptors to her midst, but there was too often something unsympathetic in their reception, something supercilious in the attitude of the sculptor towards his employer. Pollaiuolo is the only great sculptor of the early Renaissance whose masterpiece will be found in Rome. Other men may have produced works of supreme importance, but indifference allowed them to be dispersed ; thus the tombs of Forteguerra and Paul II. by Mino da Fiesole, his tabernacle in Santa Maria Maggiore and the shrine of St. Jerome, are now wholly lost or scattered beyond the power of reconstruction. Filarete's bronze doors were improved by Paul V. ; his tomb of Cardinal Ciaves has disappeared, that of Innocent VIII. has been remodelled, and the monument of Julius II. was never completed. The catalogue could be in-

definitely enlarged, and could also be extended though with less severity to record the fate of frescoes. One can understand that when cubes fell out of a mosaic restoration must follow; that when Sixtus IV. came to the conclusion that porticoes and balconies darkened the streets they had to be removed; or that if a basilica was pulled down it was not always possible to re-erect the monuments.

ATTITUDE OF THE POPES.—None the less we cannot help feeling that Roman vandalism was accompanied by a lightheartedness, by none of the apologetic spirit which prevailed elsewhere, and which without always preserving the monument, connoted a saving measure of grace. Moreover the catholicity of Roman vandalism was quite melancholy. The same Pope would issue an edict to save one monument while he was destroying its counterpart; he would give a handsome commission to one great painter to put pictures all over the work of a distinguished predecessor, though he was consistent enough to refrain from protesting against the traditional right of the Roman populace to pillage the apartments of a newly elected Pontiff. The explanation of this fickleness must be sought in the rapid succession of patrons—new men with changing ideas educated in every school of tradition and appreciation, who when selected for a post of eminence and splendour were often enough so far advanced in years that a feverish hastiness was inevitable; or on the other hand some generous

and far-sighted lover of art might be followed by a successor whose taste and whose means forbade the completion of the artistic ambitions of his predecessor. Most of all did Popes and Cardinals lack a tremendous inducement so potent elsewhere, namely a dynastic feeling and pride, and above all the high motives of filial veneration and respect. Moreover Rome could never plead as an excuse for vandalism that her population was congested within the city walls : she never had occasion to make those successive enlargements of area, those concentric rings which can be clearly traced in the topographical evolution of Florence or Bologna, and which necessitated the destruction of old buildings for modern improvements ;<sup>1</sup> this destruction, however, proceeded apace. Martin V. permitted stones to be taken from churches in order to build part of the Lateran without incurring the guilt of sacrilege (1425). The edict of Pius II. (1462) was ostensibly to protect the vanishing monuments of antiquity, but he himself quarried very largely between the Capitol and the Colosseum, and by the end of the century the Forum was looked upon as an ordinary quarry let out to contractors who surrendered a third part of their produce to the authorities : a dozen years later Sixtus IV. redressed the balance by his edict in favour of Christian monuments. There was no

<sup>1</sup> Names have survived which indicate primitive geographical situations ; for instance San Giovanni Fuorcivitas at Pistoja is now in the heart of the town.

continuity, still less any stable principle, in the policy adopted by successive Popes, and throughout the sixteenth century there are constant evidences of reaction towards one side or the other. Sixtus V., partly actuated by a spirit of modernity, partly also hostile to Pagan manifestations, wrought immense damage among classical remains, and had he been permitted would have actually destroyed the Colosseum. He considered the Vatican was an unsuitable home for the Laocoön, perhaps sharing some of the doubts of Titian, who had caricatured that over-dramatised group. Meanwhile Pius V. had issued a Bull in 1566 the purpose of which is clear, though how far its provisions were acted upon is rather uncertain. It appears that the raised slab tomb and low-lying monuments inside churches accumulated rubbish and dirt; it was therefore directed that they should all be removed unreservedly:<sup>1</sup> it illustrates the thoroughness with which such orders were issued, and it is not unnatural that many of them should have been disregarded; but it also indicates the listlessness or apathy which long existed in the minds of men who were in other senses keen and zealous lovers of art. One may ask if the Renaissance, early or mature, fully appreciated the wonderful products of its own genius.

<sup>1</sup> "Cum Primum" is the title of the Bull. Clause vii. runs: "Et ut in ecclesiis nihil indecens relinquatur, iidem provideant ut capsae omnes et deposita, seu alia cadaverum conditoria super terram existentia, omnino amoveantur, prout alias statutum fuit, et defunctorum corpora in tumbis profundis infra terram collocentur."—Bullarium IV., part 2, 285.

APPRECIATION OF SCULPTURE.—It is not to be expected that any critical spirit should have arisen until long after the first creative impulses had diffused themselves far and wide. But early appreciation did exist, although its evidences are mostly confined to the panegyrics with which the sculptor accompanied his signature. It is surprising how often the artist in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries recorded his self-satisfaction and advertised his own merits, by pointedly drawing attention to the success of his painting or sculpture. Though such methods have long ceased to be valid, this style of self-advertisement unquestionably marked an important epoch; for it not only showed pride, appreciation, and rivalry among artists, but it also connoted a public interest in the style, personality, and methods of craftsmanship, apart from the primary object of the work of art itself. Many traditions have survived which indicate a corresponding enthusiasm on the part of the public, some half-mythical, like the story of the triumphant progress of Cimabue's Madonna through the Borgo Allegro of Florence, others well authenticated, such as the record of cheering crowds at the ceremonial opening of Giovanni Pisano's gates, and the unveiling of Duccio's altar-piece in 1310. Moreover on certain occasions popular attachment towards particular objects was manifested in a very telling way, for instance when the proposal to melt down the famous silver altar was defeated in 1527 by some-

thing resembling an informal *plébiscite* of the citizens of Florence. The sale of Donatello's Magdalen in the Baptistery was also vetoed ; and it is notable how rarely sculpture was sold or exchanged until recent times : it possessed some of the inalienable character pertaining to statues of the ancient divinities. It must not, however, be supposed that this sentiment of respect marked any critical affection on the part of the public at large. Synchronous with the popular movement for preserving the silver altar-piece, the Florentines were ruthlessly destroying other monuments of far greater merit. The didactic value of sculpture (apart from its religious aspect) was frankly ignored ; its widespread prevalence, and the publicity it enjoyed on the façade or within the church, rendered any demand for museums or galleries superfluous, while there is nothing to show that the action of Paul II., in throwing open his collections to the public, satisfied any popular need or earned any particular gratitude.

INFLUENCE OF CRITICISM.—Criticism in the modern sense of the term scarcely existed. Questions of authorship, problems of paternity, the ethics of plastic psychology, and most of all the influences of schools upon individuals and *vice versa*, did not greatly trouble the minds of those who recorded the movement or history of art. Milizia, who admired Ghiberti's Doors of Paradise, attributed them to Donatello, though he added that some people ascribed them to Luca

della Robbia. Pandone singled out Isaiah of Pisa, a really mediocre artist, as deserving immortality of fame; and Petrarch, who gave more attention to these matters than most of his contemporaries, said that during his lifetime he observed but little progress in sculpture, although painting had greatly improved. Faulty as such appreciation is, and ill-informed in view of more precise knowledge which has since been marshalled, it is typical of the early Renaissance. Reasoned criticism was extraordinarily rare. Albertini's "Memoriale," like the "Memorabilia," is a formal guide-book record of names and places. Vasari's Lives, the merits of which do not materially diminish beneath the exacting tests of research, are animated by patriotism, the invariable aim being to secure credit to his native land; and it cannot be urged that his criticism exercised any influence upon the living art of the day. In point of fact destructive or hostile criticism based upon analysis or precedent was not in vogue, although when a skilled author-craftsman such as Benvenuto Cellini undertook such a task, he was able to cripple the reputation of Baccio Bandinelli, whose statue of Hercules and Cacus he subjected to a torrent of fiery and cogent abuse, exposing all its weak points and exaggerating every fault. The group is of course a vapid and perfunctory production, but had it not been for Bandinelli's somewhat polemical character, and the high opinion he held of his own works in comparison

with Michael Angelo's, it is doubtful if this Hercules would have inspired a hundred sonnets (mostly of a ribald nature), which were circulated to the detriment of the sculptor, who became a regular butt for offensive pasquinades. It must be acknowledged that this form of criticism was not very illuminating. Gian Bologna's Rape of the Sabines was also greeted with a bountiful harvest of epigrams, expressing the warmest praise.<sup>1</sup> Sansovino's Madonna at Rome likewise inspired the poets, and the sonnets suggested by the Laurentian Tombs were numerous and enthusiastic. But one feels that all this criticism was governed by a literary turn of phrase, that Rhyme and Rhythm and the elegancies of the poetaster were of more account than justice or discernment in the criticism proper. The actual sculpture was less considered than the sentiments which affected those who contrived the panegyrics, and in a word the essential art was that of the poet rather than of the sculptor, just as the signatures and epitaphs which introduced Phidias or Praxiteles were dictated by classical and historical conventions. A very different attitude was taken by Bocchi, who in 1571 published an elaborate treatise extending to 100 pages, devoted to an exposition of the virtues of the St. George by Donatello. One searches in vain for information of critical value. It might have been expected

<sup>1</sup> Collected together and re-published in 1583 by Martelli, a curious anthology of æsthetic appreciation.

that dates, history, and genealogies, that comparisons with contemporary sculpture and arguments as to the influences Donatello exercised on posterity, would have made a standard textbook of such a disquisition; but unfortunately the work is full of inaccuracies and *lacunæ*—reflecting the turgid affectations of Bocchi himself, and contributing nothing to our actual knowledge of Quattrocento sculpture; indeed the volume paints a most unflattering picture of the sixteenth-century art critic. In point of fact, after the abrogation of the hieratic canon, Italian sculpture developed along the lines of a logical and consistent evolution, independent of such external agencies as are nowadays supplied by the all-powerful critic. The constructive forces of criticism must have been potent in the workshops, and the formative influence of the great masters who employed numerous assistants was doubtless considerable; but to the public at large, neither instructed nor led astray by the professional analyst of æsthetic psychology, sculpture was a normal outcome of the fertile Italian genius, accepted and acceptable without question or surprise. We may assume that each generation believed in the immutability of its own laws of taste, and followed its own artistic or intellectual canon, guided unconsciously by the progress of earlier generations, while making discoveries and technical advances which were duly inherited as commonplaces by its successor. Classical whims

and fantasy seemed from time to time to exercise undue control, especially where mirrored by the literary and sentimental predilections of the later Cinquecento : but it will be found that the ruling spirit and the fundamental personality of sculpture remained truly Italian, and responsive throughout to a continuous modernism.

THE CLASSICAL SUBJECT-MATTER.—However artificial may have been the basis of much of the classical thought which pervaded one aspect of Renaissance life, it was more than sufficient to affect the subject-matter of Italian sculpture. There was a definite and regular demand for plastic art representing classical scenes. The patronage of rich laymen who desired to ornament their palace courtyards or the public *piazza*, tended during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to order something radically different from the statuary commissioned by the Church. Moreover long-established custom had maintained classical types and archetypes to personify the virtues, muses, graces, and demigods, for which Christian iconography presented no adequate substitutes ; and allegorical art of the Trecento and Quattrocento, such for instance as Taddeo Bartoli's great frescoes of civil government at Siena, turned almost instinctively to classical personages, to Cato or Curius Dentatus, to Cicero or Scipio Africanus, for heroic examples of civic qualities and public spirit. The great names of antiquity had a further attraction in

reviving the bygone fame of Italy, especially since unfamiliarity with the Carolingian and Arthurian Romances deprived the graphic arts of resources fully cultivated north of the Alps. Again, classical allusions were introduced upon Christian sculpture with a freedom which showed small respect for seemliness. The bronze doors of St. Peter's betray Filarete's lassitude with normal and obvious incidents. Love of variety, reversion to primitive types however irrelevant, and perhaps a sense of luxury in the enjoyment of forbidden or at any rate unorthodox fruit, impelled him to make a compound of classical episodes, Biblical miracles, and Papal politics, remarkable for exuberance, and almost unique in its incongruous medley of paganism and Christianity. Mythology, with its unlimited phases of incident and emotion, could supply so varied a background, so vast a profusion of illustration and parallel, that the classical allusion might well have become paramount. This never took place. In certain branches of sculpture, particularly in the small bronzes used for domestic decoration, on public fountains and trophies, and in the rough-hewn second-class statuary which confers a first-class distinction upon the Italian pleasure-garden and country house, the subject-matter was secular, and being secular was drawn from classical legend and text. But the classical scene was on the whole far less frequent, and certainly less influential than one would expect. The master-

pieces of Cellini and Gian Bologna and some of Bernini's best works are mythological in subject ; but their classical garb was incidental to the episode portrayed—to the Rape of the Sabines, to Perseus, Daphne, or Anchises—and their influence was small, speaking of course from the restricted aspect of their effect on classical taste and its propagation. As sculptors their influence may have been magical ; as students of mythology they exercised an insignificant pressure upon the great tendencies of art ; and these ardent admirers of antique genius never got quite so close to the late Imperial ideas as did Frederick II. and his *entourage* of Capuan artists in the thirteenth century. From 1500 onwards the classical outlook interested, but it never absorbed public opinion ; and being unable, *ex hypothesi*, to cater to the most widely diffused and to the most constant patron, namely the Church, it was held in check and could never occupy more than a secondary position. Moreover there seems to have been an instinctive distrust of the impersonal episodes so frequently found in Roman art, such as the battle scene, the procession, or the *tableaux vivants* which were erected on the Temple frontals. The fight of Centaurs and Lapithæ in the Casa Buonarotti, with its topsyturvy groups of struggling figures, and Bertoldo's bronze in the Bargello drawn from a higher point of vision in the perspective, were in the nature of studies from antique models, ex-

periments so to speak which never progressed far beyond the initial stage. The Processions, likewise, which wind round Trajan's Column were rarely copied : occasionally inspiration was drawn from these continuous and decentralised narratives,<sup>1</sup> but columnar art was of little account in Italy, except for an extensive group of Paschal candlesticks chiefly found in the old Kingdom of the Sicilies, and of very great interest as showing early methods of decoration.<sup>2</sup> When it was necessary to decorate a pilaster, the ordinary fluting or enrichment was employed, or else mosaic of a geometrical pattern was applied ; and where figures were thought needful the surface was usually divided into regular panels such as those found upon the famous pillars of the Baldacchino in San Marco—a more satisfactory method, since it treated each subject in isolation.

THE TRIUMPHAL ARCH.—Where classical forms of architecture governed the applied sculpture, for instance on the triumphal or commemorative arch, it is natural that the plastic enrichments should be disposed according to ancient fashion. These arches, which were the only surviving structures of Augustan times preserving their exact disposition of original sculpture, were the subject of care-

<sup>1</sup> For instance, in the Sala de' Stucchi, in the Palazzo del Te at Mantua.

<sup>2</sup> At Sessa, San Clemente a Casauria, at Gaeta, Capua, and Salerno ; two or three fine specimens also survive in Rome.

ful study,<sup>1</sup> and their importance as illustrating the display of official bas-reliefs ("military gazettes," as Flaxman called them) is considerable. The best modern examples will be found at Vicenza, Capua, Perugia, and Naples; Lodovico Moro erected a complimentary arch for the Emperor Maximilian "al rito Romano." But the triumphal arch soon became merged in the city gateway; and the walled towns of Italy were invariably provided with a number of the latter, though from being placed at the confluence of roadways, the point most liable to attack from besiegers, it is not to be expected that they should receive much decoration of any kind. In this respect Pietro di Martino's famous gateway at Naples is exceptional, since the frailty and delicacy of the bas-reliefs offer a singular and perhaps displeasing contrast with the colossal towers which flank the door. It is a fortress decked out with the daintiness of embroidery. Apart from these structures, classical architecture could have but little influence upon the disposition of Renaissance sculpture; and though the painters admired the picturesque qualities of Roman buildings, with the ruins of which they were surrounded—Mantegna, for instance, in his Paduan frescoes, Pinturichio in the Sistine Chapel, or Sodoma at Pienza—sculptors seldom made more

<sup>1</sup> The Siena Library possesses sketch-books of Baldassare Peruzzi and Giuliano da San Gallo (press-marked respectively S. IV. 5 and S. IV. 8) which show the attention devoted to monuments of this character.

than a perfunctory employment of Roman architecture as background to their bas-reliefs.

THE SLAVE AND CAPTIVE.—It was in less precise usages that classical influences were felt, in the adaptation of ideas rather than in the adoption of models. The custom of placing slaves or captives beneath some great monument as testimony to the prowess of the central figure was not uncommon, and a curious example of its Eastern origin is found on the Archbishop's throne in the Church of St. Nicholas at Bari, where three abject Arabs groan beneath the heavy superstructure, symbolising the victory of Christianity over Islam. The Renaissance used the motive to illustrate a feat of arms or to make some monument look still more imposing, seldom employing it to denote the dispersion of heresy—the old analogy of placing savage animals beneath the columns of porch or ambone having lapsed long before. Tacca's statue of Ferdinand I. at Livorno is only noticeable for the really fine Moors, chained to each corner of the pedestal. Francavilla placed similar figures round the base of Gian Bologna's statue of Henri IV., Desjardins did the same thing for Louis XIV., and had not technical objections existed, the motive would have been suitable for the equestrian monument.<sup>1</sup> The upright caryatides upon Michael

<sup>1</sup> Leonardo's scheme was to show Francesco Sforza trampling upon the defeated enemy, and the idea is well worked out in some drawings of 1580, in the Uffizi (Nos. 970*f* and 1766*v*). A font in Siena Cathedral is inappropriately based upon chained figures.

Angelo's monument of Julius II. (fig. 74) show the most noble treatment of a figure which carelessly handled becomes mean. Here we have a combination of force and pathos : there is no need for shackles, for these piteous slaves seem predestined to their task by temperament ; one might apply to them the plaintive comment of Michael Angelo himself, when harassed by his dilatory and obstructive patrons—“*ligato a questa sepoltura.*” The artist seems to have treated them in a sympathetic spirit, insisting as little as possible on degrading servitude as an asset to the majesty of a dead Pope : feeling perhaps what two hundred years later was formulated in one of Voltaire's letters relating to Pigalle's objection to chained slaves, “C'est un ancien usage des sculpteurs de mettre des esclaves au pied des statues des rois ; il vaudrait mieux y représenter des citoyens libres et heureux.”<sup>1</sup>

THE COLOSSUS.—The fashion for figures executed on a colossal scale can also be traced to classical or rather to archaic taste. The idea of increasing size in order to glorify a personality is common to all primitive art, and the early Christians carried on the tradition in a tentative way by painting the head of Christ on a gigantic scale in the Catacombs.<sup>2</sup> But the constant

<sup>1</sup> Letter of June 21, 1770. The influence of Michael Angelo's slaves is clearly seen on Pierre Puget's caryatides on the Hôtel de Ville at Toulon, now preserved in the Salle Puget of the Marseilles Gallery.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly in a mosaic at San Vitale, Ravenna, Abraham carries an ox which in relation to himself is not bigger than a lamb. To a lesser

tendency to enlarge the size of statuary was perhaps inevitable, and was unchecked by sumptuary laws like those of Numa which forbade the erection of any figures of more than moderate dimensions. The Pisani produced little sculpture which could not be included in the category of statuettes, while Donatello, Ghiberti, and Luca della Robbia never attempted to make their figures appear materially larger than life. It was not until classical tastes became prevalent, and when the term "colossus" acquired a definite significance, that the objectionable belief that size exists in scale rather than in proportion came to be accepted. Michael Angelo was hostile to these oversized figures, and his letter to the Pope ridiculing a scheme of putting some huge figures on the Piazza di San Lorenzo is full of humour and good sense. At the same time his large ideas tempted him into magnitude of bulk. The bronze Julius II. above the central door of San Petronio at Bologna was of necessity twelve or fourteen feet high in order suitably to occupy the *lunette*;

extent the same theory is observed in one of the mosaics in La Martorana at Palermo, where Roger of Sicily is being crowned by Christ; and one may compare early versions of the legend of St. Veronica, particularly the curious fresco in Sant' Angelo at Perugia. There are many examples of the converse treatment of the same idea, where by analogy the mean personage is reduced to grotesque insignificance, normally in the case of Judas; or where the humility of the donor is measured by the small space occupied by his family in the corner of an altar-piece, or where, as in the Sinibaldi tomb (fig. 94), the earnest pupils of a great master of learning, are shown as childlike in stature to indicate their degree of dependence.

but during one of his weary interludes at Carrara he projected a figure so vast that it should be clearly visible to the sailors passing along the sea-coast. Moreover the seated Moses on the tomb of Julius II. dominates the whole monument, though Moses must have been a man whose power lay in personality rather than in physique. Here we have a Titan, so tremendous in muscle and limb that at any altitude within the Church of San Pietro all sense of proportion would be marred. Whatever argument may be advanced to justify sculpture on such a scale, it should neither injure its surroundings nor be submerged in them. The colossi of the Italian Renaissance incur criticism on one count or the other. A typical example is the well-known Hercules in the Doria Gardens at Genoa, a huge inanity; for the hillside upon which it stands is surmounted by the Church of San Rocco, which, though small, towers above the vast statue and reduces it to insignificance. As the old Scottish proverb says, "a sparrow next the eye is greater than the eagle on Ben Ghoile." So at Genoa, Il Gigante becomes a pygmy, just as must have been the case with the Imperial colossi of which fragments are preserved in the Palazzo de' Conservatori at Rome, where the stupendous faces are modelled with such care that when erected they would convey an atmosphere of smallness and familiarity—the very conditions avoided by the Egyptian artist, whose stiff monolithic figures were justified since they came

into no conflict with mountainous nature. A relatively small statue or Pyramid beside the Nile breaks the horizon. The Sphinx is greater to the eye than Notre Dame, since being isolated upon a broad plain with nothing to detract from its scale or to provoke comparison, it stands out in clear-cut finality, and therefore magnificent against the sky-line. Among other Italian failures one may mention Gian Bologna's Jupiter Pluvius, which has the added indignity of plaster stalactites to enhance the properties of rain.<sup>1</sup> The immense figure of San Carlo Borromeo at Arona, some seventy feet high, is one of those superhuman efforts which fail to suggest comment, unless it be an unfavourable comparison with a great bronze at the other extremity of Italy, the Emperor Theodosius, a gaunt survival of Byzantine hero-worship, washed ashore at Barletta in the fifth century according to local tradition—a work of

<sup>1</sup> Jacopo Sansovino's colossal figures of Mars and Neptune, on either side of the central stairway of the Doge's Palace, occupy a good position on this "Scala de' giganti," for their size is enhanced by being seen from below, while being backed against the palace wall as well as raised aloft, they are imposing enough to be marked features in the restricted courtyard. Venice, however, did not favour colossi, and generally refrained from their employment except as basal figures for some of the later tombs; Istrian marble was unsuitable for megalithic monuments, and the difficulties of transport were of course immense. It is in Venice that the most becoming specimen of the best alternative to colossal figures will be found—namely massed statuary. The long row of figures following the cornice of the Libreria Vecchia, is executed without the pretentious dissipation of energy and material, which makes the decoration of the colonnades leading to St. Peter's meaningless as well as insincere.

true decadence, but with a grim sternness and decision, which lived on long after every other quality had deserted the Eastern sculptor.

CULT OF PHYSICAL STRENGTH AND PERFECTION.—*Grandeur* was what the Italian artist sought in making these giants; it was what he most rarely encompassed, since the subconscious motive animating colossal statuary (apart from anything based upon mere worship of bulk) was the cult of physical strength and perfection. The feats of Greek deities had always been insisted on; their statues were tributes to physical prowess, and Homer's description of athletic externals is in some respects analogous to a phase of the art of Rubens. But while Hellenic art focussed its attention upon the successful athlete and well-favoured demigod, it did so because muscular development was justified by the subject involved, be it a Discobolos, boxer, or Hercules. With later times the art becoming more anecdotal, descriptive talent of necessity introduced a wider diversity, for three men will copy the same thing each accurately, but each producing a different version based on the variation of temperament and observation. The classical art which suggested to the sixteenth century something perilously akin to the worship of corporal perfection, had already reached the anecdotal stage, after losing the brilliance of the earlier schools, which seemed to conceal the strength of the muscular system, though an intellectual atrophy was almost visible in the

features, which were often subordinated to the torso and limbs. The number of permissible emotions in the art of Phidias, for instance, was limited ; and when the Augustan period reached the stage of animation we call it the decline, whereas it was progress towards an ideal which from external causes never reached an apogee until the Christian era. This stage did not materially help the Renaissance. Christianity had always tended to neglect the human frame, concentrating on the physiognomy, although the Bible could offer many themes which would have inspired the Greek or Roman sculptor—Gideon, Jephthah, Salome, David, or Samson. The Cinquecento was never logical or persistent in following up a classical clue. Its sculptors being artists and not archæologists could not bring themselves to ignore aspects which were suppressed in the ideally treated athlete, and when they did attempt to concentrate upon physical perfection their sense of compromise, or rather the natural desire to amplify their theme, led them to engraft emotional episodes which were out of place, assuming that perfection of the human frame were their sole desideratum. Hence we find contradiction of gesture, weak men with strong muscles, mild men with scowling faces—exaggeration of one description or another, all tending to show how superficial was the influence of classical prototypes, or else how determined the Renaissance was to assimilate no more than suited its own natural bias or inclinations. The

## 310 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE

Italian Renaissance never saw classical art at its best, and studiously refrained from copying it at its worst, realising throughout that scale is only a small element in monumental art, and that the finer problems and most noble ideals rest upon intellectual or moral grandeur rather than upon physical powers. Sir Thomas Browne summarised their outlook in a famous passage of the "Religio Medici," in which he contrasts the microcosm of ants, spiders, and bees, with the less highly organised life of the bigger and more prominent animal world: "Ruder heads stand amazed at those prodigious pieces of nature, whales, elephants . . . these I confess are the Colossus and majestick pieces of her hand. But in the narrow engines (i.e. the bees &c) there is more curious mathematicks, and the civility of these little citizens more neatly sets forth the wisdom of their Maker."

## CHAPTER IX

### BAROQUE

TENDENCY TO EXAGGERATION.—The appellation Baroque, which was originally a nickname, has become a term of abuse, rather less censorious than Rococo, which connotes something fantastic or bizarre : in modern parlance Baroque means a work of art, be it sculpture, architecture, or music, in which discordant elements are freely united, where heterogeneous parts are combined into a whole which is at once trivial and pretentious. The word is of recent application, and we are apt to misuse it, much as Vasari and his contemporaries treated the word Gothic as a compendious epithet of displeasure. It is natural that the period of decadence should have produced an art which incurs hostile criticism, though it can be urged that Baroque sculpture is infinitely preferable to Baroque painting ; for the plastic art at least demands some physical effort, while the passion for invention, even if it be conventionalised or eccentric, is more tolerable in marble than on canvas. However Baroque sculpture is

not and need not be confined within a specified period or school, nor need its tendencies be limited by any time measurement. When the sculptor is fully conscious of his own mission, and feels so far enfranchised, whether from a hieratic canon, from a liberal Church, or from any restrictive patronage, that his art can make unhindered flights of imagination, the tendency to extravagance may well prove irresistible. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries such movements mark recognised stages of progress; in the sixteenth, they were the offspring of growing confidence in the craft itself, coloured by external influences of classical literature and research. In the seventeenth century analogous manifestations heralded the advent of Baroque sculpture, which reached its apogee among the followers of Bernini. One is confronted by the penalty of supreme technical skill. After prolonged periods of gestation, Italian sculpture, having successively outlived the masterpieces of Niccolo Pisano, Donatello, Michael Angelo, and Gian Bologna, became over-ripe and surcharged in its pursuit of fresh ideas. At the same time, though Baroque sculpture is, roughly speaking, comprised in the period between Bernini and Canova, the conditions which brought it into being were of much older standing. Michael Angelo's Christ in the Minerva at Rome, erected as early as 1521, and to a lesser extent the Moses, are products, premature and no doubt masterly, of the temperament which two centuries later

peopled the entire Peninsula with decadent sculpture.<sup>1</sup>

UNIFICATION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE.—It was in Rome that Baroque sculpture took the lead, the only movement since the days of the Cosmati which established its headquarters in the Eternal City; and it must be acknowledged that the underlying causes were social and political as well as æsthetic. Rome, which had so often afforded a culminating opportunity to many of the greatest artists, had long been able from her geographical situation, from her cosmopolitan tastes, and from a full measure of affluence, to patronise the individual sculptor; but before the time of Bernini the centre of gravity had always lain elsewhere, at Naples, Pisa, Florence, or Venice, and in spite of prolonged residence at Rome the artist seemed to retain a provincial personality. By the end of the sixteenth century a variety of circumstances combined to obliterate the distinctions of schools. Old limitations vanished, transport became more easy, competition more acute, and above all the marvellous progress of technical power was so universal that the old differences between territorial systems were merged into one comprehensive outlook. From this time forward the sculpture of Italy proper was unified, though

<sup>1</sup> If one contrasts Bambaja's monuments of Vimercati (Milan Cathedral) and Lanzinio Curzio (Castello, Milan), where the gift of simplicity is apparent, with the much more famous tomb of Gaston de Foix, it is clear how quickly sentiment could change and smother a fine conception with pompous unreality.

at the expense of Tuscany or the Veneto, which saw themselves denationalised. The unity thus secured was a unity of technical skill, not of sentiment or inspiration. Rome opened her arms to an accomplished world of art which for the first time acclimatised itself in her midst, and became a fixed resident rather than the honoured guest.

NEW INFLUENCES. — The environment was favourable to a rapid and almost exotic growth. The Counter-Reformation having fulfilled one of its functions with unexpected speed, the Society of Jesus was able to devote close attention to the consolidation of its domestic propaganda. A startling accession of material prosperity enabled the Jesuits to plan their churches and houses upon a scale of magnificence with which the old-fashioned orders of St. Benedict and St. Francis could no longer compete; and the foundations being new, it was natural that these establishments should be designed according to the newest ideas, and be embellished by the most modern genius available. The Jesuit love of display, vaunting at times and often tending to excess, while directed into channels *ad majorem Dei Gloriam*, was also well calculated to impress the popular mind with the power, enthusiasm, and above all with the modernity, of the most youthful of the great religious orders. Their organisation being excellent, and their income secure during the peaceful years of the Italian Settecento, they were able to erect and decorate a church without those delays

and hesitations, which stamp so divergent an aspect upon many a cathedral controlled by secular clergy. Italy can show few monuments more consistent, logical, and complete, than the fine Jesuit churches of the seventeenth century. No ancient traditions had to be preserved, no ground-plan demanded respect; and there being no accumulated store of altar-pieces, shrines, or church furniture requiring translation or adaptation in the new fabric, everything could be started *ab ovo*, and could be completed with a promptness and decision which confer a unity on the Baroque church seldom found elsewhere. These ecclesiastical ambitions were emulated by that of the artistic laity, and being based upon an organisation of art-production which permitted a swift realisation of the most immense projects, new spheres of activity seemed to be opening to Italian art. Thus under suitable conditions, with well-equipped machinery and zealous patronage, sculpture set itself to the task of inaugurating a fresh epoch which should summarise and embrace the quintessence of every previous school.

ECLECTICISM.—The eclecticism of the Bolognese painters had attained a success which was more than justified in the opinion of the seventeenth century. To be carried through with accurate and analytical discernment, such a movement can only thrive at an advanced stage of æsthetic development, when the hand and eye are well trained to a minute perception of alternatives. Niccolo Pisano

was the first of the eclectics ; but he confined his efforts to the few lessons of composition and perspective which the thirteenth century could suggest. On the other hand, Annibale Caracci was the first to reduce the theory to a working practice, and while avoiding anything in the nature of plagiarism, he firmly believed in the feasibility of combining the best features of many schools of art. At its best eclecticism is a compromise, and is too often a reincarnation of old and vanished illusions robbed of the purpose by which they were once animated. Infinitely more difficult to realise in sculpture than in painting, Bernini showed the absurdity of making a selection of the choicest items of each school or model, in the hope of achieving a grand coalition of details. Moreover, though he clearly profited by every feat of his predecessors, he never committed the error of his pupils or of the followers of Annibale Caracci, of looking upon eclecticism as an end in itself, worthy of attainment as a triumph of selective skill. It is needless to discuss specimens of eclectic sculpture ; their number is large, though less than that of eclectic paintings. Their governing fault is an absence of conviction which springs from the lack of unity. They lack the *naïveté* of the primitive schools and they are too nicely calculated to share the *brio* of the High Renaissance : their faults have none of the attractions which excuse the shortcomings of men who were *ex hypothesi* less gifted.

UNIFORMITY OF TREATMENT.—With all its contradictions and inconsequences, Baroque sculpture is less ambiguous as a definition than what is conveyed by such a term as Renaissance or Cinquecento. The fact is that the creative agencies of Italian art had previously been so complex and the interaction of forces so subtle, that the characteristics of different periods cannot be succinctly summarised, though of course they can be catalogued. The great governing movements, such as Niccolo Pisano's fixation of composition, Giotto's creation of a national Italian type, or Michael Angelo's subordination of form to intellect, were primarily the outstanding features of individual genius ; and powerful as such influences were, they were less comprehensive in range than the Baroque movement, which merged and combined all schools of thought and form. It was like a reversion to the Bronze Age, when the implement of daily usage was based upon a model of general acceptance. With this identity of treatment the charm of local idiom disappears : Milan ceased to be complementary to Florence, Venice to Naples or Rome. Giotto was famed for attaining a "common level" in all the arts, an achievement for his century ; but no longer a source of distinction in the seventeenth, when the standard of technical education was so high that all alike could work without betraying the laborious signs of experiment and research. There is no minor key in Baroque sculpture, nothing tentative.

Everything seems full-blooded, and all alike work at high pressure; moreover contemplative or reflective work seemed in little demand—curious too, since the seventeenth century was the age of Quietism in religious thought. The epithets we instinctively apply to the art of this period are general epithets, for there is no occasion to discept between endless variations like those which characterise the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This identity of treatment was correlative to a uniformity of excellence, or perhaps one should call it an equalised distribution of skill. The rivalry was between artists, not between schools; and even so it is surprising when we examine a long series of statues, for instance those decorating the nave of the Lateran, or the cupola of St. Peter's, how often some work by an acknowledged master differs in no essential from that of his pupils. It was this uniformity which so truly nationalised Italian art, so catholic that it could unconsciously absorb a man like Francavilla, who though born in Flanders and educated at Innspruck, could none the less work in Italy without preserving a trace of Northern affinities; and although later on Rome became a magnet to foreign sculptors, scores of Frenchmen having passed their lives in her midst, yet the cosmopolitanism which one might have expected to introduce alien elements (checking or at least confusing the logical trend of evolution), met an art-personality so deep-rooted that the foreigner

was embraced in the overwhelming characteristics of the day.

CONVENTIONALISM.—Baroque sculpture is marred by ineradicable defects—so pervading and ostentatious that criticism is apt to include in its censure the whole cycle of eighteenth-century art. Restlessness and irrelevance, conventionalism which involves every degree of mannerism or affectation, and eccentricity which may end in sensationalism, are all features which assert themselves with emphasis, and are generally summarised by the brief term decadence. But the ethics of this sculpture should not be dismissed offhand by some sweeping condemnation. The aftermath of five hundred years of painstaking and scrupulous study can neither lack interest nor merit, while so far as technical attainments are concerned the pupils of Bernini were men of genius; and in any case the harvest of 1650 represents the fruition of seeds sown by previous generations. Many of the errors of judgment which make the art of Algardi or Mazza displeasing, have their sources in Michael Angelo or Gian Bologna, to whom at all events conventionalism was no novelty. The accepted type of St. Peter was evolved as early as the third century, and it is moreover fitting that the cardinal scenes of Scripture should be disposed, even if the composition be arbitrary, so as to indicate an accepted guise for accepted events. The semblance of the Apostles, the environment of the

Saint, and the attribute of the Martyr, all alike demanded some measure of conventionalism in order to familiarise the public with the varied personnel of Christian history. So far it had been common to all art since the earliest fixation of type ; but its subsequent stages, which without reason or excuse carried the theory to an absurdity by conventionalising its own conventions, brought about its penalty in the form of a reaction from which Italy has not yet recovered. At the same time there was a complete absence of mere multiplication. A lively sense of variety in externals and the studied juxtaposition of different materials, redeemed this period from the dreariness and monotony which must have characterised a corresponding stage in the evolution of classical art, when in the time of Tiberius it was the custom to turn out facsimiles of popular statues by the hundred. But while Italy never subjected its art to the Imperial factory-system, she seldom attempted those daring combinations which are found in Bavaria or Spain. Instinctive limitations were set and respected, enhancing the prevailing similarities of method ; indeed, notwithstanding great ingenuity of invention, a reluctance to swerve from the recognised principles of composition had a tendency to hamper originality. Style and spirit were so uniform that one is not often tempted to search out the names and history of artists whose output was so much the product of a period, and so little reflected the personality of the individual.

MANNERISM AND AFFECTATION.—It was this conventionalism which carried in its train all kinds of mannerisms, though it is necessary to distinguish between a calculated affectation and the reflection of some strongly marked mind. The physical properties of stone, the prevailing style of architecture, and actually the situation or altitude of a town, were factors which exercised special influence upon this grade of statuary. Even had the hill-towns lying between Arezzo and Viterbo been sufficiently rich or fashionable actively to patronise Baroque sculptors, the absence of the broad piazza and the well-exposed façade must have checked luxuriant efflorescence. When mannerism enjoyed full play, for instance in the graphic arts which were independent of the hampering conditions of plastic art, it was possible to reduce a whim or idiosyncrasy to a consistent rationale. In the case of great painters it can be conceded that the pose of Perugino's figures, the opaque backgrounds of Bronzino or the gilding of Vivarini, being without counterpart in daily life, were pure fantasies, and as such we readily accept them. It is not until such things impose themselves so heavily as to overcharge the canvas and distract attention from essentials, that criticism is aroused, though every school must have its mannerisms—they exist in Michael Angelo, in Albert Dürer, and in Velazquez; but as soon as they lose sincerity and cease to be natural they become the annoying pettinesses of virtuoso and faddist.

Here and there affectation is so frank that it becomes in itself a mark of genuine feeling. The equestrian statues at Piacenza (fig. 34), Penna's tomb of a Chigi Princess (fig. 115), or Cordieri's Henry IV. at the Lateran, are so unalloyed, one might say so conscientious, that they confer a real distinction upon what is stilted or bombastic. It must be admitted that the sculptor lived in a world which was peopled with unrealities; his sitter was tinged with eccentricity or *insouciance*, and the fashion of mistaking extravagance for the picturesque pervaded his environment and coloured his art. Whether the employment of the artist's model was the cause or effect of such conditions it is difficult to say; but it is too clear that the model became indispensable. Nature supplemented or adorned by the imagination no longer sufficed, and the professional *poseur* or *poseuse* became more and more imperative. Raffaello used models, and in one of his letters to Baldassare Castiglione he complains of the difficulty in securing the type he required: *essendo carestia di belle donne . . .* While Vasari makes an odd remark that Titian's St. Sebastian is considered beautiful, although copied exactly from the life.

THE ARTIST'S MODEL.—What was exceptional soon became the rule, and every phase of the transition is well illustrated in the Papal tombs. The early monuments are graced by angels; later on by impersonal accessories. In the middle of the sixteenth century something rather more precise

was demanded, and the tombs of Sixtus V. and Pius V. have upright caryatides comely in feature and proportion. The next stage can be observed in the allegorical figures on the tombs of Nicholas IV. and Clement IX., full-length and free-standing figures though duly restrained within deep niches. Finally, with Bernini's monument of Alexander VII., the artist's model posing as one of the Virtues appears in the very foreground of the composition, occupying the point of vantage if not the place of honour. The model became the subject, or rather no subject could be formulated without a model; hence the homogeneity of this group of tombs, based upon the passion for allegory, personified with succinct precision in a long series of nymphs—healthy, vigorous, and broad-limbed. Nobody used models in our modern sense of the term less than Leonardo da Vinci; yet of all artists he made the greatest number of studies. Drawings survive of nearly every figure for the great fresco of the Last Supper at Milan—nude preliminary studies which ensured a correct fall of drapery, and Apostles' heads without beards to get accuracy of the broad features before clothing them with hair. Here is the fundamental difference between the uses to which the model was put, and we cannot fail to regret their prominence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The artist himself seems unable to stand alone, and the central feature of his altarpiece or tomb seems to be inadequate without

accretions which may be arbitrary and are often irrelevant. It is all the more regrettable since the display of power is undeniable. From the Abundantia on the tomb of Leo XI. (1605) down to the Charity on that of Innocent XII. (1746), a group still more noteworthy than its analogue on Bernini's Alexander VII., there is an unbroken sequence of these huge ancillary figures, all executed with a skill which would have made the fortune of a Quattrocentist, and many of them in their way dignified and some almost magnificent.

BERNINI.—Instead of giving a concrete form to the ideals of their imagination, they sought out the form and idealised it afterwards. Hence these allegories are haunted by the pursuit of prettiness, by which many a rare quality can be discounted and even concealed. The model-subject had to be invested with elegance and amiability, alike with pleasing address and graceful structure. Such an ideal tends to monopolise the creative faculties, or at any rate it is often incompatible with attention to other phases of emotion or drama. The dread of physical ugliness, which had long before left an impression upon Greek art, now reappears in Italian Baroque, though no longer founded upon logical grounds. Bernini was largely answerable for this, and, like his successors, seldom tried to escape from the thraldom of what was charming or seductive. His statues of Santa Bibiana and the Empress Matilda show the obsession of a preponderating

desire to please the eye. Even in his earliest work there is a measure of suavity, though overlooked in the admiration excited by the technical skill. His Apollo and Daphne (fig. 28), the David (fig. 63), and the Æneas, all early works, show no visible effort: he never seems to have had to feel his way. Perhaps there is some hesitation in the Æneas, but this may be the sculptor's intention, for Anchises was precious and rather heavy, causing Æneas to walk warily beneath the tiring burden. The David (treated as athlete) shows the youthful *bravura* of the sculptor, a little over-anxious perhaps to secure every factor of determination as well as strength. The Daphne is often called decadent and sensational. As a group, however, it has rarely been equalled, and its sense of balance has never been surpassed. Much also may be forgiven to Bernini for the expression on the two faces—Apollo himself is almost sad, anxious for the little Daphne, and not, as so often the case, mistakeable for a thwarted and disappointed faun. Anatomical knowledge was intuitive to Bernini, and his acquaintance with the laws of statics and counter-balance little short of amazing. But the less technical qualities which he bequeathed to posterity could not maintain their efficacy unimpaired. Bernini had carried plastic brilliance to its utmost limit. Long ago Niccolo Pisano had humanised the outward form of mankind, Michael Angelo vitalised it, then the magician Bernini

galvanised it ; he rivets our attention by the facility with which he could render in marble what Donatello would not have dared to attempt in terracotta, while enlarging the whole sphere of sculpture as a vehicle for the artistic interpretation of emotions, far beyond anything previously attempted. Bernini was supreme in Europe, occupying a position of unique eminence, rivalled only by certain court painters in Great Britain and Spain.<sup>1</sup> Sculptors of the latter half of the sixteenth century—Campana in Venice, Prospero Clementi in Parma, Vicenzio Danti in Tuscany, Scalza at Orvieto, and Montelupo in Rome, together with many others of equal competence—drew their inspiration from the ubiquitous influence of Michael Angelo, but showed deference and reserve in advancing beyond the theories laid down by the great master. The successors of Bernini were restrained by no similar limitations. Though many statues are closely related to Bernini's own work, such as the Rospigliosi tombs at Pistoja, the St. Isidore in Como Cathedral, or Cordieri's Santa Silvia in San Gregorio Magno at Rome, there was a growing

<sup>1</sup> Voltaire's chauvinism was scarcely justified in this connection, notwithstanding the prominence of French sculptors in Italy :

“A la voix de Colbert Bernin vint de Rome ;

De Perrault dans le Louvre il admira la main ;

‘Ah, dit-il, si Paris renferme dans son sein

des travaux si parfaits, d'un si rare génie,

fallait-il m'appeler du fond d'Italie?’”

(“III. Discours sur l'homme.”)

tendency to exaggerate where Bernini was emphatic, to be sensational where he was romantic, and to be garrulous wherever the master was merely discursive. Bernini himself is answerable for this forward policy, since up to the close of his long and busy life he was always susceptible to fresh ideas, and stimulated the younger generation to aggressive experiment.

ABSENCE OF REPOSE.—The firstfruits of this restlessness are found in the absence of repose. The classical custom of resting a stationary figure against a column or tree, as though to explain its immobility, was unsatisfactory because pleonastic, and always uncommon in Italian art. But the eighteenth century would have done well to check its effervescence by some such convention. "*Savoir s'asseoir*" was Corot's maxim : patience to watch the manifestations of nature, calm discrimination between fiction and truth, and a sedate earnestness to separate the transient from the permanent phases of potential beauty. From the death of Bernini the amount of wasted energy is overwhelming. The artist could no longer sit still. Like the races whose nomadic necessities precluded any permanent or considered arts, these men were so much impelled by the merciless haste of production, that they could spare but little time to the more exacting toil of thinking out a composition with deliberation or calm. Not only are their conceptions and ideas moulded by a fatal ease of extemporisation, but their actual crafts-

328 EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN SCULPTURE  
manship of course follows suit, reflecting their nervous and turbulent mobility.

DRAPERY.—The mannerisms of drapery often border on the ridiculous, especially where it is used as a catena to harmonise a composition. Two outstanding examples illustrate this singularity. Bernini had been criticised for investing the mattress on which he placed the Hermaphrodite with all the qualities of the genuine article, so that people admired the bed and ignored the figure : this was less or more legitimate ; but in making the tomb of Alexander VII. he unified the four Virtues (which hem in the gigantic skeleton of Time), by means of a prodigious marble counterpane of russet hue which winds in and out of the vast group with tortuous inconsequence. Still more pedantic is the Valier monument at Venice, where the Doge and his Dogaressa (*Romanā virtute, Venetā pietate et ducali coronā insignis*, as the epitaph reminds us) are reduced to nonentities, from being overpowered by the yellow satin hangings which are the central feature of the huge structure, though the baldacchino was intended to enhance the dignity of the Doge's family. Nothing of course could be more dexterous than the handling of these draperies. In the case of costume much eccentricity can be pardoned, but the swirling brocades which envelop a whole monument, and chiffonerie which weighs so many tons that it cannot look light or diaphanous, introduce motives

which carry their own conviction from being needless and delusive.

INCONGRUITY AND ECCENTRICITY.—This incongruity, which diverted decoration and sentiment as well as marble from their proper spheres, springs from an avowed pride in circumlocution. Irrelevance became ingrained with these sculptors, so consistent, and apparently calculated with such nicety, that an eighteenth-century tomb or façade which shared the severity of the older dispensation would be a disagreeable paradox. Self-confidence was much too profound to suggest such an atavism, and the natural development tended to the most fanciful ramifications—smothering their compositions with amiable irrelevance. There is a large monument in Naples Cathedral to Pope Pignatelli. It consists of a heroic-sized damsel holding aloft a gilded bronze medallion portrait of the Baroque-looking Pontiff. She is surrounded by a convoy of floating babies, five of them, the size of small giants and the picture of comfortable *bonhomie*. Clouds are freely introduced into these monuments, and as often as not they strike a note of contradiction, since their liberal scale and the unyielding consistency of marble, however dexterously caressed, preclude the conventional success achieved by the rippling cloudlets with which Andrea della Robbia enlivened a sky-line. These latter-day clouds are much too nebulous in form, and being often big enough to support a whole group, not only give the impression of make-

belief, but the more cleverly they are wrought the more acutely do they create a sense of insecurity. To render atmosphere in marble must always require tact; but still more would one imagine judgment necessary in making a public memorial to a distinguished Pope. This Pignatelli monument is only redeemed from frivolity by solid and undeniable qualities of technique. Nevertheless, relatively speaking, eccentricity is not common. One does not find the freaks and oddities so profusely made between 1550 and 1600 in Mantua, Cremona, and throughout the Emilia; indeed there was no possibility of outvying these earlier whims, nor did the eighteenth century try to advance beyond the limits imposed in this one respect by former schools. They contented themselves as a rule with the eccentricity which arises from making the work of art gossip with the spectator, bringing them into close personal touch which Donatello and Mantegna would have scorned to permit. There is a familiarity in the way angels are perched upon cornices *à propos* of nothing, and without that sureness of emplacement which distinguished the architects of the period, who, despite their curvilinear façades, undulating walls, and false perspectives (together with the interior equipment of mirrors, porcelain, and lacquer combined with stucco or wood), were masters of considered style, and men who fully appreciated the dignity of mass. Sculptors were less fastidious. A generation which wore domino-





FIG. 115.

TOMB OF PRINCESS ODESCALCHI-CHIGI, PENNA, ROME.

To face p. 331.

masks most of the afternoon and all the evening, surrounding everyday affairs with an elaborate stage-craft, was well fitted to reflect the unrealities of studied vivacity in literature and art. Nothing more tersely interprets the whole spirit of this sculpture than the turgid epitaphs which illustrate its pompous monuments. Many of them are tinged with sonorous levity, and nearly all are verbose ; and yet when one has exhausted a vocabulary of censure some quality always remains, rescuing the monument (and even its epitaph) from oblivion. Baroque sculpture cannot be forgotten, still less ignored.

One of its most singular achievements is the tomb of Princess Odescalchi-Chigi in Santa Maria del Popolo, the work of Penna (fig. 115). In scale it is imposing. At the base a marble lion is yapping as he mournfully gazes upwards towards an oval frame set with burnished brass studs, which encloses a medallion portrait of the Princess. This cameo is suspended from a cord which gives occupation to a pair of marble babies with whom an eagle is quarrelling, apparently about the custody of the tassels. There is a copious spread of drapery with fringes and figured border, an epitaph full of compliments, a smoking urn, and a magnificent bronze oak-tree growing in and out of the whole composition. At first sight this congeries is inexplicable, but in point of fact the memorial, erected as it was in the year 1772, is based upon

analogy and precedent already centuries old. The cameo replaces the recumbent effigy; the babies are the Baroque rendering of Andrea Pisano's cherubs; the epitaph, however florid, is after all an historic record. The urn is a primitive emblem of burial, the smoke of transitoriness of life; the oak is heraldic, while the lion and the eagle represent the most noble creatures of the animal world, paying their tribute to one who was herself an ornament to her time. The emotionalism of it all, notwithstanding cumbrous paraphrase and philactery, is not without a genuine note.

ROMANTICISM.—The Romanticism which is daintily suggested is much more pleasing than what was produced by the arrogant self-assurance of Caravaggio's imitators, who dressed up the Southern peasantry in picturesque squalor, with a forced naturalism which is meagre because artificial. The pupils of Salvator Rosa carried these ideas still further, aided by a murky chiaroscuro and the *macabre* tendencies which were always simmering in the Neapolitan temperament. In this respect sculpture could give a lesson to painting. Emotionalism, which is so liable to become lymphatic in one direction or to degenerate into sensationalism in the other, seems to have been treated with reserve; and such subjects as the Pietà, Entombment, or Crucifixion, became very rare, and were never handled with that violence and poignancy which

make them so displeasing among Donatello's followers in Northern Italy. Neither were Guido Mazzoni's artifices of lighting resorted to; in fact the plastic limitations of sculpture were more respected than seems to be the case at first sight. The rapture which in individual or isolated heads is so confusing, was much less common in sculpture than on canvas; likewise declamation and the anxiety for novel effects, failing original and unexplored themes, were treated with some restraint. And yet, although every great experiment seems to have been made long before, Stefano Maderno in his St. Cecilia (Rome) was able to create a masterpiece of tenderness and pathos—one of the most touching proofs that the seventeenth century was well able to combine originality with purity of line, and with the sincerity of heart-felt emotion. Such a *capo d'opera* can vindicate a whole epoch from condemnation; but it must be acknowledged that there are works of pre-eminence which are culpable in offending every precept of moderation and tact. Bernini's relief of Santa Francesca Romana is notable for exquisite handicraft, but still more as a study of hysterics; and beyond praising the technical quality of the St. Theresa (fig. 116) it is difficult to say much which is favourable. Bernini had a perfectly intelligible task, to portray the ecstasy of the Saint, and he has succeeded with unerring certitude. But what can be said of his sense of

propriety? There are many ecstasies, and Bernini has chosen something which borders closely on the most displeasing. The angel is a Cupid contemplating his victim before inflicting the *coup de grâce*. The Saint is in a semi-cataleptic fit—limp hands, failing breath, relaxed spine, all combining to make the very semblance of agonised excruciating languor. The skill with which the supreme moment of transport has been arrested and petrified is indescribable; but meanwhile note the culminating touch, for which however Bernini himself cannot wholly be blamed. On either side of the altar-piece are opera boxes from which an audience of seven life-sized robust and middle-aged gentlemen are critically gazing upon the spectacle—the commonplace figures which are so wearisome in the pictures of St. Susanna, to whom by the way the neighbouring chapel is dedicated. The whole thing is a tremendous paradox, perfervid, masterly, and inconsequent. In this particular group the irrelevance which is so common in Baroque sculpture, and the passion for movement and agitation, are subdued; but the very concentration of sentiment has in itself become an unpardonable extravagance. As a rule one is distracted or puzzled by the absence of lesson in the ambitious works of the period, by an absence of logic and cohesion. One is too often unable to detect, and still more to share, the reasons by which the sculptor was actuated, notwithstanding



FIG. 116.

ECSTASY OF ST. THERESA, GEMINI, ROME.

To face p. 14



the homeliness and amenities which are intended to be natural and engaging. The four great saints beneath the dome of St. Peter's, by Mocchi, Bernini, Quesnoy, and Bolgio, must be fifteen or eighteen feet high, but their character is such that they could be reduced in bulk, and would make delightful figurines in Dresden china to decorate a Chippendale cabinet, and to stand beside a row of shepherdesses. The bigger the statues, the less emphatic becomes the moral they were meant to enforce.

*BAROQUE IDEALS.*—It is difficult to analyse the ideals which inspired the old age of Italian sculpture; but without some collective ideal there could have been no such activity as that which marked the eighteenth century. Ethically it was less complex than that of the Cinquecento, as well as less literary and classical; moreover the great impulses of the seventeenth century bred by the Counter-Reformation spent themselves somewhat abruptly. Succeeding generations found themselves too experienced to renew with any zest the experiments of the High Renaissance, and not fervid enough to revive the ascetic and devotional concentration of primitive sculpture. Their ambitions were less elevated, but not of necessity less sincere. Liberty rather than license, freedom of pose, gesture, and design, ease and elegance, harmonious grouping with plenty of graceful accessories—these were ever present to the creative minds of the period. What the architects

desired was the *coup d'œil* amplified by ingenious fictions, and the sculptor likewise was determined to make a brave display even if he could not fire the imagination or inspire profound devotionalism. Above all, technical perfection was imperative. From the time of Bernini, who was himself accomplished from his boyhood, knowledge seemed to be intuitive, and no problem was left to solve. It was a century of professionalism with no trace of the amateur, no consciousness of effort, and no empiric or tentative stage. To them it would be no comment as it was to Luca Giordano (Luca fa presto, as his soubriquet went) that at least one more angel should be dashed on to the fresco before the painter went to lunch—" *Ancor un angelo!*"

#### DISTINCTION OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ARTISTS.

—On the contrary they had reached a stage of evolution when no triumph of technique would cause surprise; and it is worth adding, as one testimony to the personal qualities of these men, that the magnificence of scale for which plastic compositions of this period are noteworthy, was only made possible by the friendliness and cordiality with which half a dozen sculptors would work in co-operation.<sup>1</sup> Unquestionably they were

<sup>1</sup> It should perhaps be added that this rare gift was of older standing. Thus the sculpture on the monument of Pius V. is by Cordieri, Silla da Milano, Leonardo da Sarzana, Vasoldo, Giovanni della Porta, and Giles of Flanders. The tomb of Sixtus V. was designed by Fontana, and executed by Giles and Nicholas of Flanders, Piero Paolo Olivieri, Vasoldo, and Flaminio Vacca.

great men technically. Piranesi, Fuga, Penna, Tiepolo, were men of genius, giants ; not only confident in their powers, but never failing to realise their effects. One may blame their  $\eta\thetaos$ , temperament, psychology, taste, or ideals ; but there are few failures to achieve their ends. They were essentially successful men, longing to meet the difficulties which they knew they would overcome, admired all the time, and undisturbed by hostile or even by vigorous criticism, which Italy had never experienced in its modern application. Contrasted with France, there was but little tendency to the boudoir pictures of Lancret or the ball-room statuary of Versailles. Their sculpture was less flimsy and voluptuous than that of Louis XV., while in comparison with that of the Spanish decadence it could be called austere, never having been depraved by the orgies of polychromacy, costume, jewellery, and simpering affectation, which reduced the art of Spain to an insipidity which is terrific.

In Italy there was no period of corruption preceding a final catastrophe. There was no crisis or revolt, scarcely any irony, and sculptors did not revel in the passion for sheer ugliness which normally heralds an impending dissolution. Neither was there much unwholesome striving after variety for its own sake, though of course obvious efforts were made to startle and astound ; but there was little weariness and no falsification. Even where the conception was inept hand and

eye did not go astray ; and in short by refraining from dabbling in metaphysics on the one hand, or on the other from limiting their ambitions to mundanities, long tradition and solid education kept them supreme in technical skill, and in spite of defective ideals maintained a distinction during a century which, compared with that of Luca della Robbia or Michael Angelo, was poverty-stricken and moribund.

DEGENERATION.—Degeneration was inevitable. The monuments in San Severo at Naples, of which the Pudicizia is the most distressing phenomenon (fig. 84), and the demoralisation of pyrotechnics and optical delusions, seem to have culminated by the year 1770 or thereabouts, when Spinazzi, the last of the great masters, made his statue of the lawyer Lami (fig. 59) and when Penna devised the tomb of the Chigi Princess. At this moment the last phase of Italian sculpture —inherited from the early Christians, dormant throughout the long invasions, revived by Niccolo Pisano, characterised by Donatello, and welded into a miraculous synthesis by the genius of Buonarotti—at this date, 1770, the final growth of Italian sculpture seemed to be in full prosperity. By 1800 a new world had been revealed.

There had been a sudden effacement. Externally there was no premonitory symptom of collapse, no dragging of the anchor. Sculpture did not seem to be exhausted, and in any case the intellectual paralysis was not contagious, for the

last half-century marked the birth of such men as Galvani, Ugo Foscolo, Beccaria, Volta, and Donizetti. Sculpture however had played its part long as well as nobly. Rules, experience, and even the enthusiasm which still existed, were powerless to check the decay. Character had become colourless, individualism was suppressed, and force was absent. Atrophy was the inevitable result.

CANOVA.—The reaction came at last, and one cannot help wondering why it was so long delayed. Canova marks the revolution. He was an observant student during the later phases of Baroque sculpture, and convinced himself, while surveying contemporary art, that its superficialities and excess were irremediable. He failed to detect its good qualities of skill and *brio*, and, without trying to reform its palpable shortcomings, cut himself adrift from all participation in its lessons and warnings alike. Not only did he show a critical detachment from his own century, but he was also blind to mediævalism. Being determined to begin afresh and to obliterate every vestige of the past seventeen centuries, he reverted with logical precision to classical forms and phraseology. With Canova classicism no longer resembled the vague adaptations of the Cinquecento : it was thoroughgoing and complete, based on rules rather than principles, and better able than at any previous moment to study the genuine relics of antiquity. Moreover his efforts were

seconded by synchronous movements elsewhere, a subconscious internationalism which followed closely on the French Consular system. Thorwaldsen in the North, David in France, and Overbeck in Germany were in their different ways the counterparts of Canova, and Byron was far from the mark in writing, "Europe, the world, has but one Canova." Each of these four artists merited the praise which is earned by chilling probity and correctness. An art so logical and exact, forswearing all improvisation, shrinking before everything that could be light in hand or entertaining to the eye, can scarcely be expected to excite enthusiasm. Indeed it is surprising that an art which divorced itself so resolutely from Italian sentiment and tradition, sealing its protest against boisterous and full-blooded flamboyance by reducing itself to positive anaemia, should have been able to monopolise public attention as well as govern plastic enterprise. It did both. Without some prevailing apathy (such as that which allowed Napoleon to loot the Peninsula of its most treasured monuments without effective protest), Canova could never have secured unchallenged supremacy, nor could the suppression of old ideas have been so drastic. It is true that in the tomb of Clement XIV. he was unable to escape from the general lines laid down by Bernini. The monument, which is flanked by attendant Virtues, forms the environment of a doorway like Thorwaldsen's tomb of Pius VII.; but the simplicity of the





*Photo Alinari.*

FIG. 117. PERSEUS, CANOVA, ROME.



*Photo Alinari.*

FIG. 119. APOLLO BELVEDERE, ROME.



*Photo Alinari.*

FIG. 118. THE BOXER, CANOVA, ROME.



*Photo Alinari.*

FIG. 120. ST. BRUNO, HOUDON, ROME.

sarcophagus, the even fall of drapery, and the unadorned base, give it an air of meagreness which epitomises the whole reaction. Though devoid of interest in itself, the tomb remains a significant landmark; but Canova was more responsive to subjects drawn from mythology or classical literature. His Perseus (fig. 117) is the most showy and popular, though not the most successful of this group. An attitude of supple indifference scarcely harmonises with the gravity of the situation, and the horror of the Medusa's head (an admirable piece of carving) might suitably be counterpoised in the expression of the Perseus; but his impassive quasi-effeminate pose, unconscious of the dramatic juxtaposition of the severed head, robs this frigid statue of vitality and truth. It is profitable to compare it with the Belvedere Apollo (fig. 119), for in no single detail or particular could Canova enter into real competition. The attempt to create a pseudo-classic form by imperturbability and smoothness of surface was doomed to failure, and the more faultless the statue the more patent becomes the anachronism. In the Boxer (fig. 118) the introduction of melodrama is rather forced, for gladiators require no intellectualisation; and where Canova did make intellectualisation the primary motive he fell short of his predecessors. So too the Pauline Borghese (Rome) fails, since such a confection required precisely that touch of *coquetterie* and *insouciance* which the sculptor of 1750 could have infused

with perfection. Canova, however, remains the central figure of the new movement, and it is to be regretted that so capable an artist as Houdon, whose statue of St. Bruno (fig. 120) is a work of first-rate importance, should have been unable to influence the younger man; but Houdon inherited too much of the *bella epoca*.

Canova, who refused to look to such prototypes, comes as a postscript to Italian art—a man of learning and character, but one who, notwithstanding the respect he excited and the vogue obtained by his methodical craft, was essentially born out of due time. A pioneer rather than a reformer, he sought out new paths for an art which seemed decrepit and maimed. Deliberately separating himself from traditions and practice which marked the genius as well as the stability of Italian sculpture, he inaugurated a new period throughout which competing elements have been struggling for mastery, prior to the advent of some great man who shall remould the scattered theories of invention, craftsmanship, and sentiment. That these elements will be harmoniously reunited, may well be predicted by those who have confidence in the genius and courage of the Italian race.

## INDEX

- Affection in Baroque sculpture, 321  
Agostino di Duccio, 147, 173  
Allegory, 169  
Altar, the, 177  
Analogies with Northern art, 242  
Anatomy, study of, 134  
Animal life in early plastic art, 13; Ghiberti, 266  
Animation arising from movement, 137  
Annunciation, the, 158  
Anonymity of Italian busts, 92  
Antelami, B., 1, 25  
Apostle, the, 165  
Appreciation of sculpture, 293  
Arch, the triumphal, 301  
Architecture: façades, early, 23; thirteenth-century, 28; general relation to sculpture, 76, 184; in Venice, 77; Certosa di Pavia, 79; small buildings, 83; Baroque, 330  
Arnolfo di Cambio, 190  
Atavisms, 285  
Background, 85; landscape, 265; classical, 302  
Bambaja, 214  
Barbarian influences, 18  
Baroque sculpture, 311; its unity, 313; influence of Jesuits, 314; eclecticism, 315; uniformity, 317; conventionalism, 319; mannerism, 321; artist's model, 322; Bernini, 324; absence of repose, 327; drapery, 328; incongruity, 329; Penna, 331; romanticism, 332; Baroque ideals, 335; its distinction, 336; degeneration, 338  
Bas-relief, its essentials, 47; classical, 48; Milanese, 52  
Beautification of monuments, 221  
Beauty, its tradition, 126; Sansovino, 114  
Bergamo, Colleone Chapel, 79  
Bernini and the group, 66; his portraits, 91, 121; his skill, 324; romanticism, 333  
Boniface VIII., his portrait, 88, 99

## INDEX

- Borgo San Donnino, 28  
 Bronze : employment for Church doors, 29, 30 ; its influence on sculpture, 140 ; statuettes, 256, 258  
 Bruni, his tomb, 204  
 Byzantium, 7 (*see* Eastern Empire)  
 Canon, the, 128 ; Renaissance and Byzantine codes, 130 ; influence on iconography, 152  
 Canova, 339  
 Cantoria, the, 182  
 Capitals of columns, 33  
 Caricature, 91, 250  
 Caryatides, 78  
 Casts and ex-votos, 89  
 Cellini, B., 64, 136  
 Certosa di Pavia, 79  
 Children, 103  
 Christ as child, 160 ; as man, 161 ; in scenes from the Passion, 163  
 Classical influences : relative scarcity of statuary, 273 ; literary influences, 276 ; continuity of tradition, 277 ; mythology, 279 ; reminiscences, 283 ; tradition of Phidias, 283 ; conventions, 285 ; exaggeration, 286 ; subject-matter, 298  
 Coiffure, 109  
 Colleone Chapel at Bergamo, 79, 81  
 Colossus, the, 304  
 Columnar art, 301  
 Conventionalism in portraiture, 113 ; in Baroque art, 319  
 Co-operation between sculptors, 336  
 Cosmati, the, 188  
 Counter-Reformation, 142, 314  
 Criticism : Bocchi, 146 ; types of appreciation, 293 ; influence on sculptors, 294  
 Crowd, the, 253  
 Crucifixion, 163  
 Death-masks, 89  
 De Braye, Cardinal, his tomb, 190  
 Decadence of early Western art, 3 ; eighteenth-century, 338  
 Decline of religious thought, 236  
 Decoration : obscure origins, 15 ; surface treatment, 82 ; background, 85 ; various motives, 259 ; landscape, 265 ; classical, 302  
 Detail, 195, 262 ; elimination of, 24  
 Doges, their tombs, 211  
 Donatello : bas-relief, 47, 48 ; equestrian monument, 67 ; his emplacement, 74, 138 ; his sense

- of drama, 229; the crowd, 254; tombs, 221, 225
- Doors, 29, 180
- Drama, 228; *Terribilità*, 227; Michael Angelo and the dramatic sense, 233; Giacomo della Quercia, 231; Donatello, 229
- Drapery, 145, 146; added to statues, 143; Baroque drapery, 328
- Duplication of portraits, 93; of motive, 217
- Eastern Empire: influences on early sculpture, 6, 7; durability of influence, 131
- Eclecticism, 315
- Emblems of mortality, 223
- Emplacement of sculpture, 74; at Pavia, 80
- Ephemeridæ, 245
- Epitaph, the, 222
- Equestrian statues, 67
- Ethnographic portraiture, 244
- Exaggeration: in anatomy, 141; in decoration of statues, 237; in classical paraphrase, 239; in drapery, 147; in Baroque art, 311
- Finish of sculpture, 74, 195
- Flora and fauna, 13, 266
- Fountain, the, 247
- Frederick II., his revival of Roman art, 38, 279
- Free-standing sculpture, 57; development to group, 58; the Madonna, 157; the tomb, 210
- Friars, their influence, 35, 40
- Genre, 254
- Ghiberti, 264, 266
- Giacomo della Quercia, 210, 231
- Giovanni Pisano, 191
- Giovannini, 103
- Glyptic art, 256
- Goldsmiths, their influence, 86
- Gothic art in relation to Italian sculpture, 40; hostility to the term, 42; Northern analogies absent, 242
- Grotesque, 224, 250
- Group, the, 57; Mazzoni's, 60; High Renaissance, 63; Michael Angelo, 64; Bernini, 66, 324; Donatello, 229
- Guido da Como, 95
- Heraldic decoration, 197, 268
- Historical scenes, 51, 253
- Honorific portraiture, 110

## INDEX

- Houdon, 342
- Humanism and the classical para-phrase, 239
- Iconoclasm, 8 ; vindictiveness, 162
- Iconography, Biblical, 43, 132 ; progress, 151, 153
- Ideographs, 24
- Inscriptions and epitaphs, 116, 222
- Irrelevance, 181 ; in Baroque sculpture, 329
- Jesuits, their influence on sculpture, 314
- Jewellery, 86, 237
- Kneeling figures, 112
- Landscape background, 265 ; classical conventions, 284 ; Michael Angelo, 72
- Laurana, 102
- Lombard, early influences, 18
- Lunette, 54
- Madonna, 154
- Mannerisms of Baroque sculpture, 321
- Marble : its employment in Rome, 270 ; influence as material, 139
- Martyr, the, 165
- Material, influence of, 139
- Mazzoni, his groups, 60, 92
- Medals, 105, 256
- Michael Angelo : his groups, 64 ; as master of form, 72 ; generic treatment, 72, 115 ; as portraitist, 115 ; as master of anatomy, 144 ; as mystic, 175 ; as dramatist, 233 ; his scheme of decoration, 262
- Milanese bas-relief, 52 ; tombs of fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, 214
- Mino da Fiesole, 207
- Model, the artist's, 322
- Mortality, the emblems of, 223 ; exaggeration of the motive, 225
- Movement, the essentials, 137 ; Bernini, 67
- Mysticism, 171
- Naples, Gothic tombs at, 195
- Niccolo Pisano : relation to Apulian sculpture, 33 ; relation to classical tradition, 36 ; relation to Gothic influences, 39 ; as portraitist, 96
- Niche, the, 56

## INDEX

347

- Nude, the : classical tradition, 132 ;  
attitude of the Church, 133  
  
Opulence blamed by St. Bernard,  
34, 236 ; effect on sculpture, 286  
Orcagna, 97  
Oriental early influences, 4, 5  
  
conventionalised portraiture,  
113 ; Michael Angelo, 72, 115 ;  
seventeenth - century reaction,  
117 ; Roman busts, 119 ; Ber-  
nini, 121 ; ethnographic, 244  
Preferences; local, 168  
Prophet, the, 165  
Pulpit, the, 182

- Paraphrase, 169 ; classical, 239  
Pavia, Certosa, 79  
Pedagogues, their tombs, 193  
Penna, 331  
Pietro da Toledo, his tomb, 112  
Plaquettes, 256  
Polychromacy, 84, 269  
Popes : their portrait statues, 99,  
122 ; tombs, 219 ; attitude to-  
wards antiquities, 290 ; vandal-  
ism, 292  
Portraiture : traditions, 89 ; its  
essentials, 91 ; frequently anonym-  
ous, 92 ; thirteenth-century,  
94 ; physiognomy of sex, 95 ;  
figure by Guido da Como, 95 ;  
by Niccolo Pisano, 96 ; four-  
teenth-century, 97 ; Orcagna,  
97 ; Papal portraits, 99 ; fifteenth-  
century, 100 ; busts of women,  
102 ; busts within recesses, 106 ;  
sixteenth-century, 107 ; hono-  
rific, 110 ; kneeling figures, 112 ;  
  
Ravenna : early, 10 ; tombs at, 11,  
187  
Reaction against the nude, 141 ;  
against florid portraiture, 117 ;  
against classicism, 240  
Restlessness of Baroque art, 327  
Restoration of monuments, 221  
Robbia, Giovanni della, 84  
Robbia, Luca della : his bas-relief,  
48, 50 ; the group, 159  
Roman art : survival of tradition,  
2 ; Cosmati, 188 ; portraiture in  
seventeenth century, 119 ; re-  
lative scarcity of examples in  
fifteenth century, 273  
Romanticism in Baroque sculpture,  
332  
Rossellino, Bernardo, 204  
Rosso of Perugia, 58, 59  
  
Sarcophagi, 11, 187  
Scaliger tombs, 198

## INDEX

- Sculptors : their status, 45, 46 ; co-operation, 336 ; unification of their style, 313
- Seated figures, 193
- Shrine, the, 178
- Slab tombs, 208
- Slave, the, in plastic art, 303
- Stucco, 246
- Symbolism, 172
- Terribilità, 227
- Tombs : classical tradition, 186 ; Pisanesque schools, 190 ; of Pedagogues, 193 ; Gothic group at Naples, 195 ; at Verona, 198 ; Florentine of the Quattrocento, 200 ; B. Rossellino, 204 ; slab tombs, 208 ; free-standing, 210 ; Doges' tombs, 211 ; Milanese, 214 ; Papal tombs, 219
- Tondo, 80 ; influence on portraiture, 105
- Types, fixation of, 43
- Unfinished statues, 65, 73
- Vandalism, 288
- Venice : San Marco, relation to sculpture, 77 ; paucity of portraits, 119 ; sepulchral monuments, 211 ; absence of fountains, 248
- Verona, the Scaliger tombs, 198
- Water-supply, influence on sculpture, 247

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ISSUED BY MR. MURRAY

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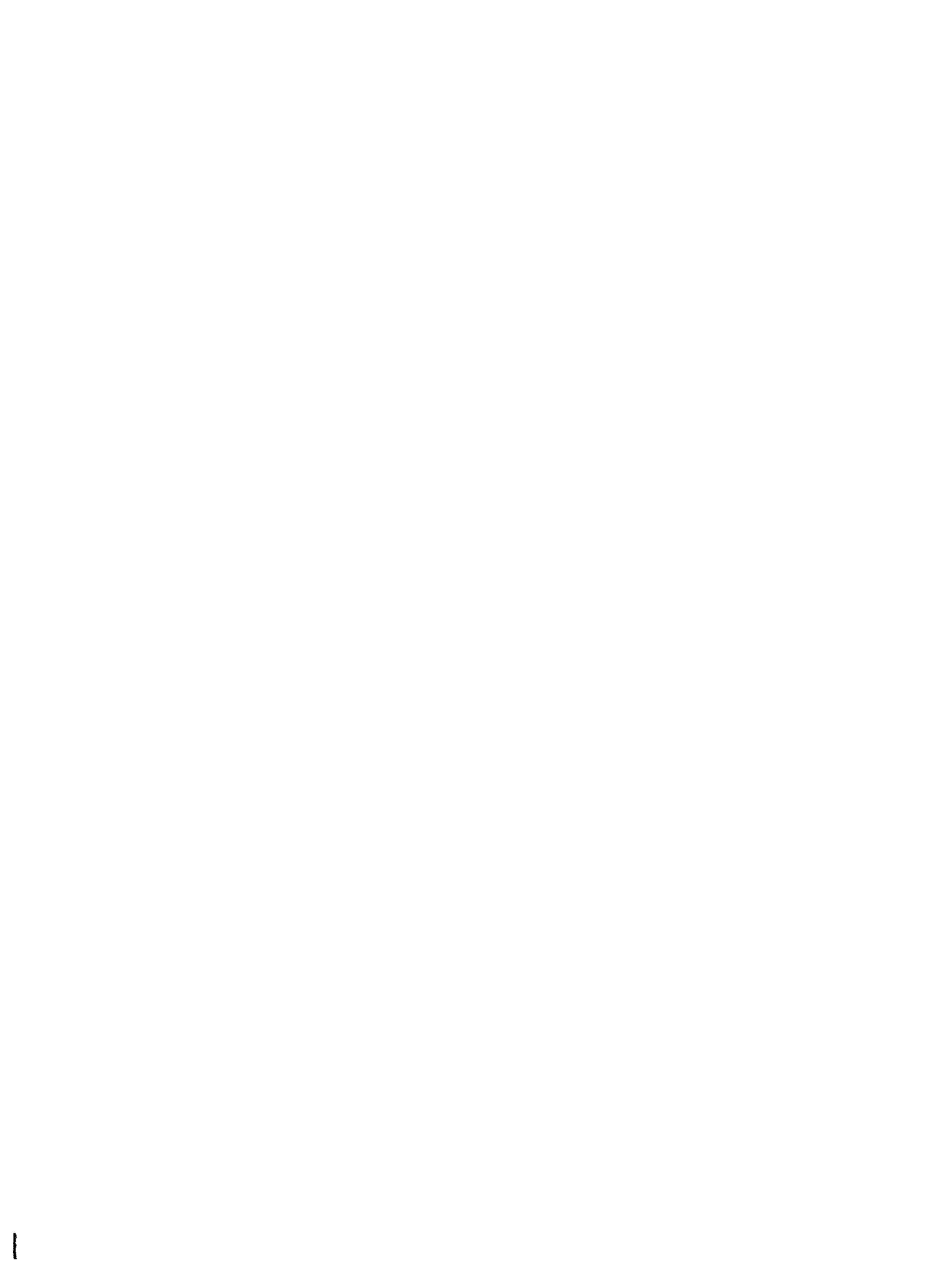
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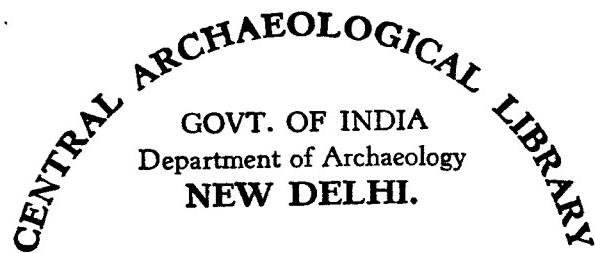








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